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30p EVERY WEEKDAY

Police check hospitals over 'backdoor euthanasia'

THE deaths of at least 50 hospital patients around Britain are being investigated by police and health officials amid allegations of a creeping tide of backdoor euthanasia.

Seven separate inquiries are looking into claims that doctors have withheld intravenous drips from dehydrated patients, often while they were under sedation, and left them to die from thirst. The patients involved were suffering from strokes, asthma, other common medical conditions and dementia. At least five hospitals — in Derby, Surrey, Kent and Sussex — are at the centre of police inquiries as a result of relatives' complaints or nurses' whistle-blowing, while others have been referred to the General Medical Council and health authorities.

The Crown Prosecution Service will soon decide whether to prosecute in two important cases in which doctors have been accused of manslaughter due to criminal negligence. In the most serious of these, police are investigating 40 deaths at the Kingsway Hospital in Derby, where nurses claimed that dementia sufferers on a psycho-geriatric ward were starved and dehydrated until they became so weak that they died from infections.

The inquiry was launched in November, 1997 after junior nurses complained, and papers relating to patients at the hospital between 1993 and 1997 are expected to be sent to the CPS in the spring.

In general, the practice of denying nutrition and fluids to patients diagnosed as entering the final phase of a terminal illness is defined as "helping nature to take its course". But some doctors condemn it as involuntary euthanasia.

The cases of patients in persistent vegetative state (PVS) such as the Hillsborough disaster victim Tony Bland, must be referred to the courts. But a grey ethical area allows doctors to "exercise their clinical judgment" in other cases.

Sources in the medical profession suggest that some may be using that discretion to keep patients quiet and acquiescent on the wards. Some who have had a momentary choking fit, for example, have then been put on a nil-by-mouth regime, sedated and left to dehydrate.

Dr Gillian Craig, a retired consultant geriatrician from Northampton, has told the Royal College of Physicians that water and food are basic human needs that should not be regarded as treatment that a doctor may give or withhold. "Sadly there are times when sedation without hydration seems tantamount to euthanasia."

"This strengthens the hand of those who are pressing to legalise physician-assisted suicide. Good palliative medicine is a major defence against euthanasia, but please heed my warning. Sedation without hydration has enormous potential for misuse. I would like to see this regime consigned to the dustbin of history."

"Attention to hydration is not merely an option, it should be a basic part of good medicine."

Another case being considered by the CPS concerns the death of an 81-year-old woman who was admitted to hospital in Surrey in May 1997 for treatment for constipation and a urine infection. Her health was otherwise good. She was denied intravenous fluids, in spite of the pleading of relatives.

At one stage a hospital crash team, called at her daughter's insistence by a doctor previously unconnected with the case, carried out emergency measures that required cutting into her neck and groin arteries to insert fluid lines. But septicaemia and multiorgan failure had by then set in. Her daughter said: "This was not a dying patient when she was admitted. In fact she was a relatively healthy lady, full of fun, with a relatively common problem. Six days later she was on her death bed as a direct result of dehydration. I had literally begged them with my hands pressed together in supplication to rehydrate her."

The issue of withholding or withdrawing treatment has been taken

Saddam tries to lure US jets into trap

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN fighter aircraft attacked Iraqi planes in the air for the first time for six years yesterday after Saddam Hussein apparently tried to lure the Western pilots into a trap.

Six air-to-air missiles were fired at warplanes in the southern no-fly zone, which was being patrolled by F14 Navy jets and F15 fighters. Iraqi MiG and Mirage warplanes committed eight separate violations with between 13 and 15 planes yesterday, but none appeared to have been shot down in the two skirmishes in which missiles were fired — although one is thought to have crashed after running out of fuel.

The Pentagon suspected that Saddam was trying to lure American planes into areas where they would be vulnerable to surface-to-air missiles or surprise attack from other aircraft, but the spokesman Ken Bacon said that American pilots were trained to deal with that.

Yesterday's incidents followed two missile exchanges with Iraqi missile batteries in eight days. Saddam has said that Baghdad will no longer recognize the no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq.

set up after the 1991 Gulf War to protect Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south. But Mr Bacon saw the transgressions as a sign that the Iraqi leader was frustrated and that the mistakes of Operation Desert Fox had done more damage to his military infrastructure than had been thought.

Reporting yesterday's incident, an Iraqi military spokesman said: "The hawks of our brave air force confronted and clashed with the aggressive American and British planes at 10.22 (0722 GMT) and the enemy planes withdrew. All the planes of our air force returned to their bases safely."

At the same time, Saddam urged Arabs to overthrow their leaders if they were allied to America. "Revolt against foreign powers, their aggression and their armies and chase them. Kick out injustice and its perpetrators," he said in a speech to mark the anniversary of the foundation of the Iraqi army. "Revolt against those who boast of friendship with the United States, those who are guided by (US Defence Secretary) William Cohen."

"The dwarves on their thrones will be forced to hear you, or else they will step down to give way for the people to say their opinion and take their action."

The city of Jerusalem was a "humiliated hostage" and the holy Muslim city of Medina, in Saudi Arabia, was "wounded" by the presence of foreign soldiers and their spears. Look around to see how mischievous persons have humiliated your sacred places which are now trodden by foreign powers after conspiring with them so as to hit the great Iraq of Jihad," Saddam said.

The renewed military action came as the White House continued with preparations for Mr Clinton's trial by the Senate, which opens tomorrow. The hearing, once expected to be over by next week, is now thought more likely to be a full-scale trial with witnesses, including Monica Lewinsky.



Prince Harry shows off his jumping skills on a pair of 3ft snowblades during a photocall at Klosters yesterday

Prince Harry takes to the air with the latest skiing craze

BY ALAN HAMILTON

PRINCE HARRY gave a powerful boost to the latest winter craze of snowblading yesterday when he executed a small but perfect ski jump in front of the world's media and landed on his feet unaided by the steady influence of poles.

There was no mistaking the generation gap between the 14-year-old Prince and his 50-year-old father as they performed their ritual photocall for the press during their annual skiing holiday at Klosters in the Swiss Alps. The Prince of Wales led off with a small and cautious jump from a modest snow hummock using conventional skis and poles.

But his son quickly outshone him. Wearing a pair of 3ft snowblades, less than half the length of traditional skis, given to him by his French manufacturers, Harry soared a good two feet in the air, twice the altitude of his father's effort, and landed without faltering.

Photocalls at Klosters are something of a tradition to the Prince and his sons, so much so that the shy Prince William elected to stay behind this year and join friends in Scotland. The Prince of Wales agreed to one brief meeting with the press in the hope that they will then leave him alone for the rest of his week's holiday.

Last year, in the wake of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, the arrangement worked well. This year the Prince and his younger son, by performing tricks for the cameras, have given the media appetite for more.

In a brief and amicable exchange with reporters the Prince was asked whether he or his son was the better skier. "That is not a fair question. I suspect youth has the advantage," he replied. Asked if he would be sending a postcard to Prince William, the Prince wryly replied: "I think William will be able to read about it."

Prince Harry is emerging as an enthusiastic and competent skier, more Harry the Hawk than Eddie the Eagle. Last year he tried Big Foot fun skis: this year he has mastered snowblades, described by their makers as the snow equivalent of in-line skating, slightly wider and more flexible than regular skis.

The main advantage of snowblades over the Big Foot skis is speed. Their manoeuvrability also make them good for flips and jumps and snowbladers are set to rival snowboarders for tricks on the snowboarding parks springing up in Alpine resorts. Purists turn their noses up at snowblades as they sink in deep powder snow.

Snowblades do not have the normal ski binding which releases the foot when the wearer falls. Instead they have an adjustable binding which keeps boot and ski together whatever happens.

The Princes are accompanied on their holiday by Tiggy Legge-Bourke, a former nanny to the Prince's children, and Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, the so-called "IT" girl whose parents are long-standing skiing partners of the Prince.

Aden orders out anti-terror Yard squad

FROM DANIEL MCGORRY IN ADEN

TWO Scotland Yard detectives were told last night to leave Aden on the first available flight after being refused permission to interview the leader of the gang that abducted 16 Western hostages.

The order to leave the port city came hours after the Governor of Aden promised the anti-terrorist detectives full co-operation. The sudden change of heart by the Yemenis may well cause a serious diplomatic rift. The joint Scotland Yard and FBI investigation becomes meaningless if the detectives cannot question Abu Hassan or the three terrorists arrested in Aden for trying to blow up British targets.

British diplomats were stunned by the order from Aden's security chief, General Mohammed Saleh Taratik, who had been prepared to let police visit the scene of the gunfight in which four hostages died. The FBI and the Yard detectives have not yet been ordered out of Yemen. But that may happen if diplomatic relations worsen today.

Swift retaliation is expected

from Whitehall and Washington, who fear Yemen is being used as a base by Islamic terrorists.

The FBI is convinced the kidnap last week was carried out by Islamic terrorists funded and trained by the Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden, who is accused of being behind a series of bombings on Western targets.

Diplomats will try to get senior Yemeni officials to change their minds today, but the two detectives are returning to the capital Sanaa. The Foreign Office has already strongly criticised the Yemeni government for their handling of this affair.

The Yard detectives have now spent four days being refused any access to any of the key figures involved in the recent terrorist atrocities. The Yemeni authorities fear the Yard team will uncover embarrassing links with major terrorist groups, including bin Laden, whose family have investments in the country.

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Whelan tipped for job at union

CHARLIE WHELAN, the Chancellor's departing spin-doctor, is tipped for a job with the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Rather than turning his back on frontline politics following a turbulent 20 months in the Treasury, the move would allow the controversial Mr Whelan to remain closely involved in the Westminster scene.

Speculation about such a move has already prompted fears in government circles that Mr Whelan, blamed by ministers for leaking the details of Peter Mandelson's £373,000 home loan, could use the post to act as a thorn in the Government's side. One government

A job at the TGWU would keep Brown's former aide in touch, says Roland Watson

source, asked how Downing Street would react if Mr Whelan moved to the TGWU, said "with absolute horror".

Mr Whelan, said by friends to remain very committed to the world of organised labour, indicated yesterday that he was not looking for a lucrative job in the City, despite rumoured six-figure offers.

Another potential avenue - his hopes of securing a job with his beloved Tottenham Hotspur - also appeared to be dashed last night. Alan Sugar, the chairman of the Premier

League club, interrupted a holiday in the United States to say: "I have had no contact with Mr Whelan and I personally cannot conceive of any role for him at Tottenham".

But the possibility of Mr Whelan working for the TGWU is said to have been raised at the highest levels of the union. Bill Morris, the TGWU general secretary, is a close ally of Mr Brown, and the union has been a consistent supporter of the Chancellor.

Mr Whelan is highly regarded in union circles, both for his ideologi-

cal roots on the left - he is a former communist - and for his ability as a backroom fixer while working for the AEU.

However, such a high-profile return to his roots would unsettle those ministers who want his departure from the Treasury to draw a line both under the affair of Mr Mandelson's home loan and the often bitter personal rivalry between the camp-followers of Mr Brown and the Prime Minister.

Mr Whelan was last night expected to leave his job within days follow-

ing a day of concerted Tory attacks. The Opposition said it was untenable for him to remain in office so close to the March Budget after he had announced his resignation.

In comments interpreted by MPs as a signal to Mr Whelan not to delay his departure, Peter Kilroy, minister in the Cabinet Office, said he believed the spin-doctor would be leaving "sooner rather than later".

The job of the TGWU's senior press spokesman has been vacant since the summer and the union is currently undergoing an internal re-

organisation. Mr Morris told *The Times* last night that the possibility of Mr Whelan working for the union was a "hypothetical situation". He added: "You are asking me a question out of the blue. We have no need for a press officer and I do the hiring and firing around here."

Mr Whelan, who was unavailable for comment, will need the "agreement of the Crown" before he takes up any job outside Government. The words are included in his contract, as they are for all special advisers employed by ministers. "The Crown" in this instance means Sir Andrew Turnbull, the Permanent Secretary at the Treasury.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Unionist rift over Sinn Féin

One of the smallest parties in the Northern Ireland Assembly split yesterday when four of its five representatives abandoned their leader. The defectors formed the Northern Ireland Unionist Party, leaving Robert McCartney, the MP for North Down, as the sole voice in the assembly of the UK Unionist Party.

The break was over his call for a walkout if Sinn Féin is admitted to the executive without prior IRA decommissioning. There are now seven Unionist groups.

Terrorists foiled

The Continuity IRA - the only republican terrorist group not to have declared a ceasefire - was yesterday said to be behind a bungled £500,000 raid on a security van in Dublin. Garda sources believe the terrorists were on a fund-raising mission to sponsor a new wave of terrorism when they rammed a Brinks-Alfred security van.

Ward suspect

A second suspect was charged yesterday with the murder of British tourist Julie Ward in the Masei Mara game reserve in Kenya ten years ago. David Kadula ole Nchioko, 28, a former clerk at the reserve, appeared in court in Nairobi before the chief magistrate Peter Mugo. He did not enter a plea but faces the death penalty if convicted.

Born in prison

A woman gave birth to a boy only hours after being jailed for four months for dealing in drugs. Sharon Williams, 32, began her sentence in the maternity unit of Fazakerley Hospital after going into labour as she was taken to the cells in Liverpool Crown Court. Williams, who has four other children, will be transferred to a mother and baby unit.

Pellet boy critical

A schoolboy was unconscious last night after he was shot in the head with an air-gun pellet while playing with friends in Clacton, Essex. Richard Bryant, 13, was transferred by a specialist neurological unit after it was found that the pellet was lodged close to his brain. A 14-year-old boy was later arrested on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm.

Train hits car

A passenger train caught fire after vandals pushed a burning car into its path. There were more than 40 commuters on board, all of whom escaped injury. The two-carriage train crashed into the stolen car on a level crossing near Cwmbach, South Wales. Flames engulfed one of the carriages, shattering windows and melting seats.

MoD sex case

A senior army officer, cleared of scandalous conduct after an affair with a Wren, started a sex discrimination case against the Ministry of Defence at Southampton. Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Pope, 42, was suspended after a court martial. Lieutenant-Commander Karen Pearce, with whom he had the affair, is being considered for promotion.

Muslim protesters will dog Blair's trip to South Africa

TONY BLAIR'S first official visit to South Africa risks being overshadowed by demonstrations by angry Muslims protesting over Britain's decision to join in air attacks on Iraq last month.

Muslims against Global Oppression (MAGO) have threatened to hold a mass demonstration in Cape Town on Thursday and further protests in other areas.

The group has insisted that they will hound the prime minister throughout his visit, the first to South Africa since Mr Blair gained power. It has made clear that it is totally opposed to the bombing of Iraq and was "disgusted at the killing of innocent women and children." The group's spokesman has said: "We will hound him wherever he goes."

But Downing Street made clear last night that the prime minister would be taking no extra security personnel with him on his trip, despite fears of mass protests. A spokesman said that Mr Blair had been aware of the threats but had no intention of changing his personal security arrangements.

A spokesman said that the South African police would play a large role in ensuring adequate security during the visit and the prime minister was happy to rely on this, said the spokesman.

Demonstrators will hold mass meetings against air strikes, reports Jill Sherman

It is understood that security arrangements in South Africa are always very tight during visits of heads of state or government.

Mr Blair will be collected this morning from the Seychelles where he is holidaying with his wife and family, before flying to Pretoria for his first visit to South Africa since he became prime minister.

The prime minister's spokesman insisted that there would be no extra cost to the taxpayer divert to the Seychelles on a chartered British Airways Jumbo jet.

The aim of the visit is to bid farewell to the outgoing President Nelson Mandela and strengthen ties with Thabo Mbeki, the deputy president who is likely to succeed Mr Mandela later this year.

During his visit Mr Blair will have several meetings with Mr Mbeki to discuss new

investment and defence orders and an aid package for South Africa and the whole continent.

Mr Blair's spokesman said that the two men would discuss defence orders worth over £1 billion which covered a range of equipment and had already involved extensive negotiations.

The spokesman also suggested that the trade links between the two countries could be supported by up to £4 billion in extra British investment.

The prime minister is determined to further develop Britain's relations with South Africa and Africa as a whole. He will be discussing his government's "Third Way" approach which was similar to some policy thinking in South Africa.

The prime minister will also ask President Mandela to continue applying pressure to persuade Colonel Gaddafi to agree a trial in The Hague for the two Libyans suspected of the Lockerbie Pan Am jet bombs. In addition give President Mandela a detailed background on Britain's decision to join the US in the raids on Iraq.

During his visit he will also meet British defence advisers who have been helping to reconstruct South Africa's defence forces into a volunteer army capable of playing key peacekeeping roles.



The white-tailed eagle had virtually vanished from Scotland until the reintroduction programme started in 1968.

Eagle off the danger list

THE magnificent white-tailed eagle is back in such numbers in Scotland that it was removed from the official list of rare birds yesterday.

Britain's largest native bird of prey suffered from the attentions of trophy hunters and sheep farmers to such an extent throughout the 19th century that the population dwindled rapidly, with the last pair

breeding on Skye in 1916. Only the odd migrant was seen on British shores until 1968, when a project to reintroduce the white-tailed eagle, also known as the sea eagle, was launched on Rhum in the Inner Hebrides using birds from Norway.

The huge birds - scientific name *Haliaeetus albicilla* - slowly but surely began to re-

establish themselves and breed in small numbers. Now half a dozen pairs are breeding successfully in a good year - enough for them to be removed from the official list of the British Birds Rareities Committee.

□ The Savi's warbler is the latest officially endangered bird after numbers plummeted to one or two pairs.



Savi's warbler: endangered

Care in community no threat, say psychiatrists

By SUSIE STEINER

PSYCHIATRISTS provoked anger yesterday by saying that care in the community had had no effect on the number of murders committed by the mentally ill.

Research by two forensic psychiatrists for the Institute of Psychiatry showed a steady drop in the proportion of murders committed by the mentally ill since the 1950s, despite the closure of mental hospitals and the adoption of community care.

"There is a great anxiety that, with the advent of community care, that all of us become much more vulnerable," said Professor Pamela Taylor, one of the report's authors, at a

press conference yesterday. "The figures simply don't support that. There is no evidence to support the notion that community care has influenced the figures or made society a more dangerous place."

While around 40 people are killed each year by people with mental disorders, the researchers emphasised that around 4,000 died annually on Britain's roads.

Michael Howlett, director of the Zito Trust, said: "To compare the chances of being killed by a mentally ill person with the chances of being killed in a car crash is not only meaningless but insensitive to the feelings of families who

have been bereaved. What the death of Jonathan Zito in 1992 exposed in graphic detail was the failure of services to cope with seriously difficult patients who are abandoned by those responsible for their welfare."

"It is remarkable that psychiatrists, who have been as vociferous as anyone in their criticism of Government policy, should now appear to be saying that root-and-branch reform is not necessary."

Marjorie Wallcut, chief executive of SANE, said: "It benefits no one to ignore the flaws of a system whose failings are exposed time and again when a tragedy is investigated."

Shifting views on euthanasia

FORTY years ago, when I was a junior hospital doctor, the ethics that determined our care for the elderly and the terminally ill were well understood. We didn't need a High Court decision, welcome as the recent one has been, to allow us to use adequate doses of analgesia to control pain, albeit that the side-effects might shorten the patient's life. However, even if we didn't strive officiously to keep patients alive by overtreating those who

lives had become a misery, we did nothing to shorten a life deliberately when the only objective was the earlier death of the patient. Older doctors are shocked at the idea of deliberately dehydrating patients. All doctors realise that there

are patients who are unlikely to make a good recovery but are likely to survive. A problem is that, whereas to a young doctor the quality of life of these patients may seem so low as to be not worth keeping, most of the patients are

very grateful for what life they have. Research has shown that the criteria considered to warrant euthanasia by people who believe in it when they are young and active become more stringent once the person questioned is older and nearer death.

If fluids are withdrawn death is inevitable from dehydration within days. If the patient is conscious the only way of saving them the discomfort, pain and restlessness that would precede their death is to tranquillise them, even if the sedatives prescribed will further hasten their end. If the same sedatives were given as one massive dose nobody would have any doubts that this was euthanasia, and even if they are given in smaller doses over a period of time, the end result is the same.

It is ironic that before a life-support machine can be turned off in the case of someone who, for instance, has suffered an irretrievable head injury, the procedures that have to be fulfilled are exhaustive, and the decision is taken at the highest level.

If, on the other hand, fluids are to be withheld so that the patient will surely die, this may be at the behest of junior staff.

Police check hospital deaths

Continued from page 1
up by the British Medical Association in a huge consultation exercise and the association's medical ethics committee hopes to produce practical guidelines when it is complete.

The consultation paper, *Withdrawing and Withholding Treatment*, asks whether food and drink might be withdrawn from patients such as severely impaired stroke victims as well as those in a persistent vegetative state.

But Dr Craig said: "This is already happening without any regulation whatsoever. Moreover, the BMA are clearly aware of this. It can happen

when the carers have reached the limit of their resources and are no longer able to stand patients' problems without anxiety, guilt or anger. A sedative will alter the situation and produce a patient who, if not dead, is at least quiet."

She also spoke about the dangers of grouping together patients who might be misdiagnosed as terminally ill in institutions where staff are oriented towards death and non-intervention. She cited the case of an elderly man sent to hospital for terminal care with a diagnosis of cancer. The geriatrician felt the diagnosis was not well established and found the

main problem was dehydration. With intravenous rehydration and intensive nursing, he recovered and went home for 18 months.

Some doctors are concerned over the distress dehydration can cause even in PVS patients. Dr Anthony Cole, a consultant paediatrician at Worcester Royal Infirmary and chairman of a Roman Catholic ethics committee, said: "There is some scientific evidence that, if the base of the brain is intact, patients will experience thirst even if the higher functions have been lost. Death from dehydration is painful and unacceptable."

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Churches turn Che into the Son of God

THE image of the communist revolutionary Che Guevara is being used by Britain's Churches to represent Jesus Christ in the latest Easter advertising campaign.

The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church have distanced themselves from the campaign, even though both denominations were represented on the ecumenical group behind it.

The poster of Che, who executed traitors in the jungle and once said he would "slit the throats of any enemy who falls into my hands", was also criticised by leading evangelicals and traditionalists. One leading bishop said it was especially misleading to portray a revolutionary image given the "mealy-mouthed comments" of bishops over the Iraq affair last month.

For the Churches' campaign, the world-renowned picture of Che Guevara has been overlaid with an image of Jesus from a classical painting to produce a black-on-red poster designed to help new Christians "discover the real Jesus".

The poster has clear overtones of the Alberto Korda photograph that has graced millions of student bedsits and T-shirts worldwide. Intended for church noticeboards, bus stops and advertising hoardings, it says: "Meek and Mild. As If. Discover the Real Jesus. Church April 4."

Controversial advert claims

Jesus was a revolutionary, reports Ruth Gledhill

The campaign was masterminded by the same Christian advertising executives who dreamed up the controversial "Bad Hair Day" Christmas campaign. An earlier Easter campaign had to be withdrawn because of copyright problems with the intended slogan, based on the X-Files.

Chas Bayfield, of the leading agency HBC, and Partners, which handles the British Evangelical Alliance and many others, is one of two advertising executives who donated their time free to draw up the campaign. Mr Bayfield,

who worked on the Che poster with Trevor Webb of the agency DMB & B, said: "The traditional image of Jesus is a bit of a fairy in a white dress with a halo. The New Testament version is very different. Jesus is actually a revolutionary."

Mr Bayfield is a member of Christians in the Media, a group of about 30 advertising and marketing executives set up to help the churches promote themselves better.

He said he developed the poster by taking the image of Che Guevara and overlaying a classical painting of Christ. He found on an Internet site.

"Jesus was an angry man a lot of the time," he said. "He was not all sweetness and light. Those with a Sunday school view of Christianity might be shocked by it but anyone who reads the Bible regularly will not be."

The Christians in the Media team was overseen by the Churches Advertising Network, an ecumenical group with representatives from all the mainstream churches.

One member, the Rev Peter Owen-Jones, Rector of Haslingfield, Cambridge, and a former advertising executive who was ordained priest in



Church leaders fear that the advertisement, reminiscent of the student posters of Che Guevara, will turn people away from the church

1995, admitted the advertisements were provocative.

Referring to the Benetton campaigns, he said there was no intention on the network's part to cause offence. "We do not want to use shock tactics."

But he added: "The traditional Jesus has been seen as this meek and mild, almost ineffable figure. But he was crucified for being quite the oppo-

sition. We are not saying Jesus was a communist. We are saying Jesus was a revolutionary."

The Rev Tom Ambrose, of the Ely diocese and a member of the network, said the aim was to encourage people to challenge stereotypes. "We do not want to produce wallpaper, we want advertisements that will stand up and be noticed."

He said the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, had not been consulted. When he showed the poster to his own Bishop, Dr Stephen Sykes, of Ely, the response was "silence".

The network, set up in 1991 with a low-key advertising campaign in the Oxford diocese, is sending out 50,000 brochures to churches nationwide urging them to buy the £15 four-sheet posters, or A3 posters for £1 each, to put on their noticeboards.

The Right Rev Nigel McCulloch, Bishop of Wakefield and chairman of the Church of England communications committee, said: "There is a big difference between Che Guevara and Jesus. Some churches could bowl them-

selves out just by putting it up."

The Right Rev Noel Debroys Jones, Bishop of Sodor and Man and former Chaplain of the Fleet, said he would be advising churches in his diocese not to use it. "This is a bad attempt to get people into church. I am not one for little yellow chicks and fluffy things at Easter, but I don't think this poster is the right message either."

Barrister fined for harassing former girlfriend

By SUSIE STEINER

A SENIOR barrister harassed a female colleague with phone calls, letters and unsolicited visits in a bid to resume their affair, it could be said yesterday, Justin Webster, who frequently undertook cases for the Crown Prosecution Service, pleaded guilty to harassment charges at Huddersfield Crown Court. He now faces disciplinary action from the Bar Council.

The 37-year-old father of three pursued an affair with fellow barrister Rosamund Sheffield, 30, after the pair first met in April 1995. Stephen Hopkins, prosecuting, told the court that after a break-up in May 1996: "Even when Miss Sheffield formed a brief relationship with someone else, he was unrelenting in his pursuit."

The affair continued on and off until February last year. Webster was charged with harassing Miss Sheffield between February and May 1998. "He telephoned her hundreds of times at all hours of the day and night and repeatedly wrote her letters... it was also occasionally abusive and threatening. It caused her great and obvious distress," Mr Hopkins said.

Webster, of Baywater, London, once made 23 calls to her home within two hours. "He told her he had left a poisonous character reference about her at two or three sets of chambers which she wanted to join," said Mr Hopkins.

Edward Jenkins, defending, said: "It was a very passionate and difficult relationship. He did not ever seek to wreck Miss Sheffield's career."

Magistrate Christopher Pratt fined Webster £1,200 and banned him from contacting Miss Sheffield for two years.

Police facing mystery of murdered boy

By RICHARD DUCE

CHRISTOPHER SWALES was a 15-year-old boy with everything to live for. He was popular in his school and expected to do well in his forthcoming exams.

His body was found on Sunday partially buried on a beach at the Lincolnshire resort town of Skegness, police have been facing murder mystery. They have no clues as to how he came to be there. Their main lead is the receipts found on his clothing, which indicate that he spent some of the Saturday night before at a nightclub called 'The Sledge'.

At the Earl of Scarborough School, which Christopher attended, pupils returned from their Christmas holidays to be told of his murder. Some have been counselled by teachers.

Steven Elliott, head teacher, said yesterday: "This really takes your breath away. I remember Chris laughing just before Christmas and now we have to get used to the fact that we're not going to see him again."

Mr Elliott said that Christopher was a bright, popular boy with a wide circle of friends. He was studying for ten GCSEs and teachers expected him to get some of the best results in the school.

It is understood that he had been staying with friends over the New Year weekend so his family did not consider him to be missing. Security video footage from the nightclub and tapes from cameras around the town centre have been collected for examination by detectives. Detective Superintendent Nick Howard, the officer leading the inquiry, said: "I would appeal to anyone who knows Christopher and saw him on Saturday evening or Sunday morning to contact the police as soon as possible."



Christopher Swales: body partially buried



Police search for evidence on the beach at Skegness

Drink mother had five children in car

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A WOMAN was three times over the drink-drive limit when her car carrying her five young children in the back crashed off the road, crashed into a field and burst over.

A police officer found Helen Dargue, 32, of Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland, wandering dazed and distressed around the field. Her 11-year-old daughter had a broken arm and the other four, aged between three and 12, complained of cuts and bruises.

Dargue, who had been drinking with her husband earlier in the day, was placed on probation for 18 months, disqualified from driving for two years and ordered to pay £40 costs by magistrates at Bedlington, Northumberland, on Monday. She had admitted drink-driving.

The accident happened last November when the Renault Savanna car left the A189 spine road near Cramlington. A policeman found the car on its roof in a farmer's field.

A subsequent breath test showed that Mrs Dargue had 95 millilitres of alcohol in her blood, 60 millilitres above the legal limit. The court was told that Mrs Dargue was of good character and was extremely sorry for what she had done. It was entirely out of character.

John Lawson, for Dargue, said that she and her husband had been drinking to forget a "great personal loss" that she had suffered some years ago.

A spokeswoman for the Campaign Against Drink Driving suggested that a two-year driving ban was mild punishment for such a "stupid and irresponsible" action.

Driver 'hung head in shame'

Helen Johnstone on boy's admission at death crash scene

A STOLEN Range Rover that crossed the central reservation of a motorway into the path of a minibus, killing three people, was being driven by a 14-year-old schoolboy.

A survivor yesterday described how the boy sat with his head bowed, unable to look at emergency services battling to free the crash victims from the wreckage. Alicia Clair, a mother of four, said that he later admitted he had been driving.

Still shaken by the crash, Mrs Clair, 53, described the accident in which two women workmates and the minibus driver died on Monday. "Everybody was talking to each other about what they did on New Year's Eve and we were really happy and cheerful. I remember somebody shouting, 'Oh, my God, I looked down the aisle of the bus and through the front

windscreen and there was a car hurtling towards us."

As she and the three boys in the Range Rover were being treated at the scene, she asked the schoolboy if he had been driving. "He said 'Yes' and just hung his head down in shame, looking at the ground. The driver looked young, but I was so shocked when I found out that he was only 14."

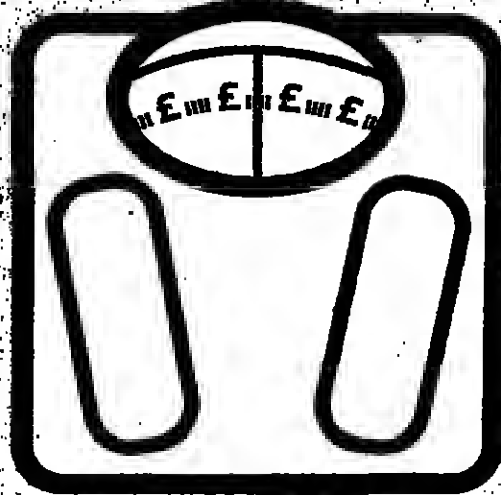
Hampshire Police yesterday confirmed that the Range Rover, which belonged to a friend of the boy's family and

had been parked outside his home in Clanfield, was reported stolen on Monday afternoon. The driver and two others, aged 15 and 16, from Petersfield, have been released on police bail until March.

A spokesman said a full investigation would be undertaken by accident investigation officers in consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service.

The dead man was yesterday named as Peter Mitchell, 41, a father of two from Bournemouth. It was later revealed that his brother-in-law only learnt while he was comforting his bereaved sister that his fiancée had also died in the crash.

Kevin Vickers, 24, and Ann Williamson, 30, lived in Southsea. Miss Williamson's colleague, Doris Hale, 41, from Portsmouth, also died in the collision which took place on the A3(M).



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Violent women attack on quiet

By HANNAH BRITTS

THE popular stereotype of the battered husband as a hen-pecked weakling takes a knock in a survey today.

Women attack men where and when they are most vulnerable: one third of victims featured in the survey were attacked in their sleep and a quarter kicked in the testicles. One case involved a woman pouring bleach over her sleeping boyfriend's genitals.

The survey shows that angry women can be just as violent as men. Forty per cent used some kind of weapon to compensate for their relative lack of strength. Knives were the instrument of choice, but hammers, bottles and slippers also featured. Seventy

six per cent of the male victims were bigger and stronger than the women who abused them. This may also account for the fact that 89 per cent of male victims felt that the police did not take their complaints seriously: only 7 per cent of women abusers were arrested.

The survey was conducted for the Channel 4 documentary series *Dispatches* and the results will be screened tomorrow. It was analysed for the programme by Professor Kevin Browne, of Birmingham University, a consultant to the Home Office on family violence. He said that it "certainly contains some surprises for those who study domestic violence."

Mints get pets out of a hole

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

FOR a petshop manager flooded out in the storms that battered Scotland this week, one well-known circular sweet will always be known as "the mint with the vole".

Stuart Sommerville used plastic Super Polo Mint containers as makeshift lifejackets for hamsters and guinea pigs trapped in his shop in the Ayrshire coast town of Largs.

Mr Sommerville, 31, who runs Beaks 'n' Squawks, feared for the lives of his smaller pets as the water rose to his waist and threatened to swamp the cages during 80mph gales that battered Scotland on Monday. Unable to open the petshop door because of the force of the water

outside, he and his menagerie of rabbits, birds, fish, hamsters and guinea pigs were trapped for three hours.

After lifting some of the cages to higher shelves and realising he could not hold up all the pets at once, Mr Sommerville spotted a can of foam and about five packets of Super Polos. In a flash of inspiration he seized on the idea of filling the plastic containers with foam and tying them to the little creatures with string to increase their buoyancy if the worst came to the worst.

Mr Sommerville and his charges were eventually rescued and yesterday they were safe in the bedroom of his home after attention with a hairdryer.

I'll do it my way, says new man at Dome

LORD Falconer of Thoroton yesterday promised to "crack the whip" to get the Millennium Dome ready in time as he visited the site in Greenwich for the first time.

In the first day of his new job as Dome Minister, the peer praised the "immense" work of his predecessor, Peter Mandelson, but insisted that he would do things his way.

He spent the day in a series of briefings, being brought up to date on the progress of the Dome and the work needed to complete the £758 million project on time.

After touring the site, Lord Falconer said it was "very, very impressive", and brushed aside Tory accusations that he had been appointed as a result of his close friendship with Tony Blair. "It's for others to judge what my qualities are," he said. "The Prime Minister

Lord Falconer admits Jubilee Line may not be completed in time, reports James Landale

thought I was the right man for the job, but only time will tell if he was right."

He added: "I don't think anyone can fill Peter Mandelson's boots. I could never emulate Peter in respect of the work he did for the Dome. I shall just have to do things in my own way."

Asked if he would be the "ringmaster" that the Dome needed, he said: "I don't think

it's going to be necessary to crack the whip. But if it is necessary, crack the whip I will."

Although Mr Mandelson was almost obsessive in his support for the Dome and over the last 18 months did much of the work necessary to get the project up and running, Lord Falconer still faces a substantial in-tray.

As the Government shareholder in the New Millennium Experience Company — which runs the day to day work — he will not take operational decisions. But he is responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time and fulfils all the Government's aims. He will also have to be the public face of the Dome in Government.

Top of his work list is the need to find more private sponsorship. The company has so far secured pledges for



Lord Falconer at the Dome site yesterday: "I don't think anyone can fill Peter Mandelson's boots. I shall just have to do things in my own way"

£120 million, £30 million short of its target.

As important are the worries about London Underground's new Jubilee Line, which will link the Dome to the centre of the capital. Many fear it will not be ready in time, yet more than 40 per cent of the 12 million expected visitors are forecast to use the line to reach the site. Although the line is the responsibility of the

Transport Department, Lord Falconer will spend much time urging his colleagues to make sure that it is completed in time. "We believe it will be, but I don't think there's anybody in the world who can completely guarantee it."

The peer will also have to ensure that the 14 themed "zones" within the Dome are completed on time and fit with the Government's criteria.

Ministers stipulated that they should be educational, inspiring, and that they involve the whole country.

A fourth job for Lord Falconer is what to do with the Dome after the millennium celebrations. Several companies have expressed an interest in turning the Dome into a convention centre, a regional sports centre or a massive leisure complex. Four consortia

— including a Hollywood film studio — were yesterday understood to have recently proposed turning the site into a film and television production complex. Lord Falconer and Cabinet Office officials will not consider formal bids until later this month.

Lord Falconer will also have to start preparations for the massive New Year's Eve party at the Dome, which is expected

to attract at least 10,000 people. Until 18 months ago, Charlie Falconer was an anonymous barrister who just happened to be a school friend of the Prime Minister. Ennobled and thrust into the Government, he has been equally unknown as Solicitor General, then as Cabinet Office Minister.

Yesterday he took his first steps towards becoming a public figure.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Babysitter on murder charge

A 12-year-old girl has appeared before a youth court in Manchester charged with the murder of a 16-month-old toddler. The girl, who cannot be named, is accused of fatally injuring Molly Adams at the child's home in Crumpsall, Manchester, while babysitting last month. The toddler died in hospital from a fractured skull and brain injuries, but the girl denies that she deliberately harmed her. She was remanded on bail until February 16.

Hoddle divorced

The 19-year marriage of Glenn Hoddle and his wife, Anne, ended yesterday after a court was told that he admitted adultery. The divorce was granted to Mrs Hoddle on the ground that their marriage had irretrievably broken down.

Water firm fined

Anglian Water Services was fined £10,000 for supplying unfit water to Haleshead in Essex in December 1977 after a burst main and a drop in a reservoir level. One woman found black water coming from her cold tap.

Gem of a man

Police have praised the bonosity of Dave Gilbert, a railway worker who handed in £4,000 worth of stolen jewellery that he found in a bag on the platform of the Maidstone West station in Kent. The haul has been returned to its owners.

Burglary shock

A man returned home the day after his wife's death to find that burglars had broken in and stolen her wedding and engagement rings from a cupboard. George Saul, 80, of Bradford, had been married to Elsie, 79, for 58 years.

Coin identified

An Anglo-Saxon gold coin found near Gloucester has been identified as a thrymsa. It differs from five similar coins discovered at Crondall, Kent, in 1828 because the letters around the edge are thought to spell out the word Wunceston.

Runaway couple spotted on train

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE police hunt for the runaway couple who vanished with their two foster children moved to the tourist areas of North Yorkshire yesterday after they were seen on a scenic steam railway.

Jeffrey Bramley, 34, and his wife, Jennifer, 35, were noticed by a volunteer ticket collector sitting in a railway carriage with the girls. The collector, the Rev Jack Cooper, said that the older girl, five-year-old Jade Bennett, had been screaming and her sister, Hannah, three, appeared restless. Detectives have been searching for the missing "family" since they disappeared from their home in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, four months ago after the couple's application to become permanent adoptive parents had been turned down.

Mr Cooper, 54, telephoned police on Monday to tell them that he had seen saw a family answering the Bramleys' description on the 1.50pm train from Grosmont, near Whitby, on Saturday. The four travelled through the Esk Valley and across the North York Moors before getting off the train at Pickering, about 15 miles from York, about 3pm.

Mr Cooper said that the children's untrams had annoyed other train passengers. "The couple seemed inadequate. She was just sitting there watching and he was trying to get them to be quiet but did not seem able to be making much of a job of it. The children looked all right," he said. "The only reason I noticed them was because, quite bluntly, the children were a damned nuisance."

Mr Cooper told the girls a story about how noisy children frightened sheep. This seemed to calm them down but neither of the adults appeared happy about the intrusion.

Detective Sergeant Mark Nicholson, who is leading the search, said that the couple had most likely been living in bed-and-breakfast hotels in the York area, but that police feared they may become desperate as their money began to run out.

Passenger tried to open jet door

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, AVIATION CORRESPONDENT

A DRUNKEN passenger on a transatlantic jet tried to open an exit door at 30,000 feet as cabin crew and other passengers struggled to restrain him.

Witnesses said the man, a 31-year-old Scot, went "berserk", lashing out and injuring a crew member and three passengers. The incident, on board a Continental Airlines flight to Gatwick, was described by police there as one of the worst cases of air rage they had dealt with.

The aircraft's second officer was called from the flight deck to try to subdue the man, who broke free and tried to open the rear door. Although locking systems and pressurised cabins should make it impos-

ible to open an exit door in flight, any threat to do so can be deemed an offence.

Action intended to endanger life is among the most serious offences under aviation law. It carries a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment and a £5,000 fine.

Police at Gatwick were alerted as the aircraft, flying from Newark, New Jersey, approached the airport on Monday night. By the time it had landed staff had managed to subdue the man and secure him to his seat using handcuffs, which are carried by most airlines on long-haul flights.

A man was released on bail by Sussex police last night.

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Doctors
killing c



must wait
know fate

Warning
after more
meningitis
deaths

سكذر بن زكي محمد

Doctors cleared of killing cancer boy

Mother attacks decision to drop case, write Tim Jones and Alex O'Connell

TWO senior doctors were cleared yesterday of the manslaughter of a 12-year-old cancer victim as an Old Bailey judge condemned Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children for a "chapter of accidents and misunderstandings".

Richie William, who had been given a 75 per cent chance of surviving chemotherapy, died in agony five days after a drug was injected into his spine instead of a vein.

Charges against John Lee, 34, a specialist registrar in paediatric anaesthetics, and Dermot Murphy, 34, a registrar in haematology, were withdrawn after an important prosecution witness changed his mind over their degree of culpability.

After the decision, the boy's mother, Dolores William, 37, who is pursuing a civil claim for damages, said: "Instead of helping him to recover from his illness, Richie was injected with a drug that killed him. We expect hospitals to help to cure our children, not give them treatment that kills."

Mrs William, of Catford, southeast London, who has two older daughters, added: "We are still devastated by the way Richie died. He suffered a great deal of pain in the days before his death because of the negligent treatment he received. The doctors never personally apologised to me, Richard's dad or his sister. It would go a long way."

The Crown Prosecution Service had relied on the evidence of a prosecution witness, Alan Aitkenhead, in its decision to press charges against the two men. At first, Professor Aitken-



Dolores and Richie William, who died aged 12

head stated that Dr Lee's conduct over the injection had fallen "seriously and significantly below that which could be demanded of him".

Later Professor Aitkenhead, Professor of Anaesthetics at Nottingham University, decided that significant failures in the system operated by the hospital at the time had greater responsibility than he had first thought.

As a result, the CPS was advised to drop the prosecution, because it was unlikely to secure a conviction. Yesterday the two men were found not guilty by the Recorder of London, Judge Michael Hyam.

Richard Horwell, for the prosecution, said that, at the time of the incident, in July 1997, Richie was in his 14th week of intensive treatment and was about to have his last course of chemotherapy. Mr Horwell told the court that there had been a number of failures that had led to the boy's death. Before the fatal injection, the boy had eaten a his-

chemotherapy into the spine. Mr Horwell said one of the two drugs used, Vincristine, could be taken only intravenously and, if injected into the spine, invariably proved fatal.

At Great Ormond Street, Richie, instead of being admitted to the Lion Ward, which specialised in such treatment, was taken to the more general Nuffield Ward. From there, a nurse wrongly sent Vincristine to the operating theatre in spite of a rule that stated it should never be allowed in.

Mr Horwell said: "If it had not been sent to the theatre, Richie would not have died."

Robert Greighton, the hospital's chief executive, said the two doctors had been suspended and would now be subject to an inquiry. Its conclusions would be sent to the General Medical Council, which would review their position.

A spokesman for Great Ormond Street said it had taken steps to improve communication and clinical procedures.



Dr Lee, left, and Dr Murphy, from Great Ormond Street, were cleared of manslaughter at the Old Bailey yesterday

Runaway couple spotted on train

Pair must wait to know fate

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE two Great Ormond Street doctors will continue to be suspended from duty until the case has been studied by an NHS tribunal. Only if they are cleared by the tribunal will they be able to resume their specialised jobs.

If they are found guilty by the tribunal, the case may be referred to the General Medical Council to decide whether they should be struck off the medical register, but that is unlikely to happen now they have been cleared by the courts.

Peter Tomlin, secretary of the Society of Clinical Psychiatrists, which champions the cause of suspended doctors, said that the continuing suspension was another example of the "unfair double jeopardy"

faced by members of the profession. He has a report out tomorrow looking at the cases of 201 practitioners suspended over the past 10 years. It shows that the average cost of successfully prosecuting one doctor is £2.5 million.

"Only one doctor in six of those who are suspended is ever found to have been in the wrong, yet someone who is suspended without justification can have a career ruined after spending years waiting for the NHS to make up its mind," he said.

"An innocent person loses his income, has a reputation smeared and yet has no recompense. The longer the case, the worse the injustice, and some cases can drag on for years without a result."

Scientists discover cancer protector

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A WAY of making cancer cells commit suicide has been developed by scientists who believe the discovery could lead to a new generation of drugs to tackle the disease.

A team from Brunel University in West London has found a way of neutralising the enzyme that protects cancer cells from the natural ageing process that destroys normal cells.

Robert Newbold, who led the research, said: "An international race to find this natural inhibitor has been running for many years and this latest discovery has really put British scientists a step ahead."

Normally, old or damaged cells stop dividing and self-destruct in order to prevent any mutations being duplicated and growing into tumours. However, cancer cells contain an enzyme called "telomerase" which overrides this natural process, so they ignore the self-destruct messages and continue to multiply indefinitely.

Reporting the findings in today's issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, Professor Newbold says they have now discovered a way of switching off the enzyme so that the normal process takes over. The next stage will be to find ways to mimic the group of genes that effectively control the natural ageing process of cells. It is hoped this will lead to the synthetic production of drugs to block telomerase and halt the growth of tumours.

Warning after more meningitis deaths

By A CORRESPONDENT

HEALTH experts warned the public to be vigilant for the symptoms of meningitis after two more deaths from the disease were confirmed yesterday.

At least nine deaths from meningitis have been reported over Christmas and the new year, with most of the victims children or teenagers.

The Meningitis Trust said: "Sadly, the reports we are seeing are pretty typical. December or early January are the peak times for meningitis cases. You might see an increase from the average 38 cases a week to around 70 cases."

Meningitis can be passed from one person to another by sneezing, coughing or kissing. The trust spokeswoman said the increase in colds over the winter months made people especially vulnerable. "It's important people are vigilant at this time of year. They need to be alert for the signs of meningitis and contact a doctor as soon as symptoms appear."

It was confirmed yesterday that a five-month-old boy from Dinas Powys, near Cardiff, had died in Cardiff's University Hospital from the serious meningococcal strain. A 42-year-old woman, from Taff's Well, near Cardiff, died in East Glamorgan Hospital.

Symptoms of meningitis include severe headache, vomiting, joint and muscle pains and an aversion to bright light. A rash that does not disperse under pressure indicates meningococcal septicaemia, the most dangerous form.

Cut out and stick on your office door

Dear Colleagues,

This Thursday I will be leaving the office at 8.00pm at the latest.

Not 8.30pm, not 8.15pm, not even 8.01pm, but 8.00pm.

This gives me a whole hour in which to get home and secure a good seat for the new series of Friends and ER.

I regret any inconvenience this may cause but unfortunately it's unavoidable.

For maximum effect:

1. Place on photocopier, and enlarge by 141%.
2. Tape the two sections together.

New series of Friends and ER. SKY
Thursday 7th January from 9pm.
See it first on Sky One.

one

The Thatcher theory of women's success

Study shows female managers go to great lengths to appear more macho than men, writes Alexandra Freen

WOMEN who succeed as managers do not do so because of their feminine characteristics, such as sensitivity and warmth. According to new research, they do well because they adopt an aggressive, macho personality.

A four-year study of the psychological make-up of more than 1,200 managers has found that the basic differences between the sexes in the general population are largely non-existent among managers. The survey contradicts claims this week by the style writer Peter York, who said his own studies had found that women managers displaying motherly qualities were more successful.

Tuvia Melamed, an occupational psychologist and senior consultant for the recruitment consultancy Capita Ras, who conducted the research, said that women managers not only had to behave like their male colleagues to succeed, but also frequently had to be tougher and meaner. "Gender matters very little," he said. "What characterises managers most is that they are tough-minded, macho and socially bold. Many of the women we studied said they felt they had to be more like a man than men. Forget about the caring, sharing Nineties and polit-

ical correctness. That just does not work — toughness does." The findings, presented at a British Psychological Society conference in Blackpool yesterday, fly in the face of current management theory, which holds that women should be given a fast track to promotion because the supposedly inherent female abilities to communicate well, work as a team, nurture relationships and to care and share can enhance business performance. Although the number of women managers has risen dramatically — from 2 per cent in 1973 to 18 per cent in 1998 — some larger companies have launched affirmative action programmes to speed up

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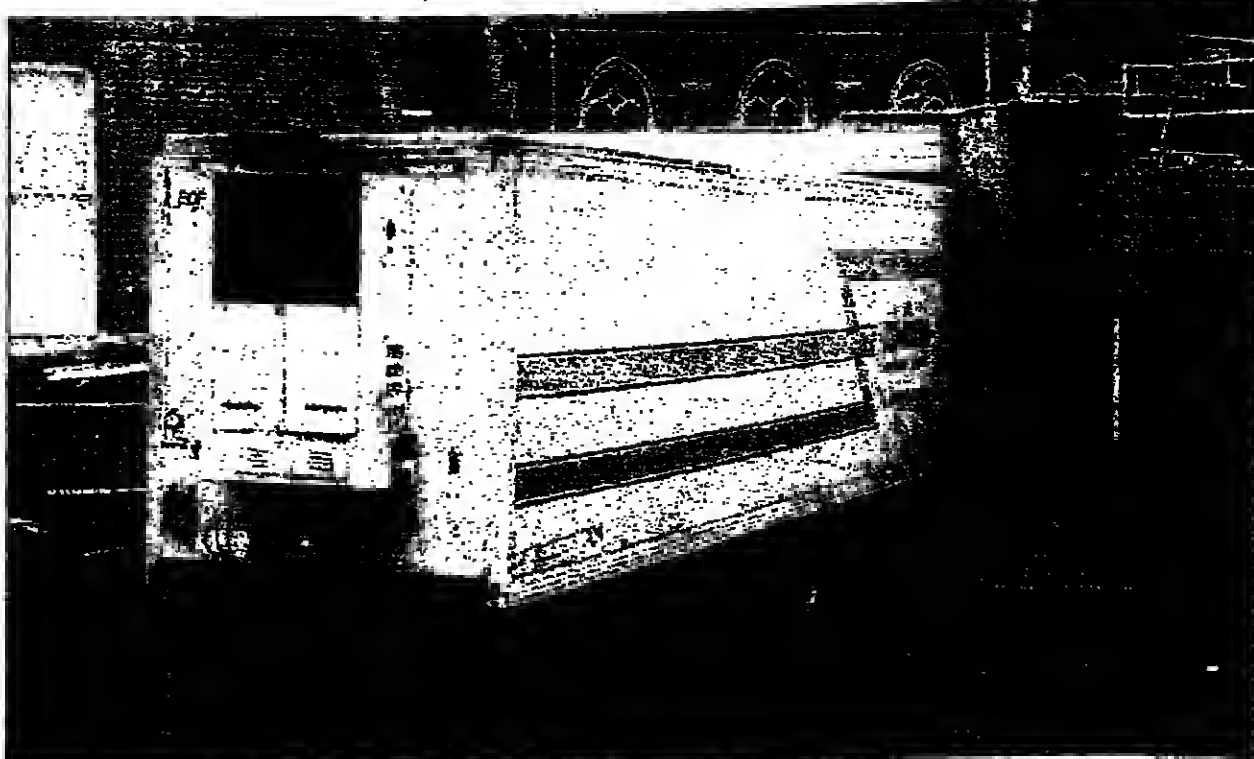
the pace of change. BT has appointed a "gender champion" to promote equal opportunities within the company; Shell has pledged to increase the number of senior women managers from 4 per cent to 20 per cent over five years.

The practical implications of Dr Melamed's research are far-reaching and raise serious questions about the relevance of setting such quotas for numbers of female managers. The survey is based on inter-

views with 294 female and 949 male managers, whose personalities were then analysed and compared with gender norms for the general population. The interviews took place between 1993 and 1997.

Dr Melamed found that, while many women managers had a "built-in tendency" to behave like men — what he described as the "Margaret Thatcher phenomenon" — many had to work very hard at putting on their macho act. This could make it difficult for companies to retain female executives for any length of time. "A lot of women said they had difficulties with having to act tough and there was a higher level of stress among women managers than men," Dr Melamed said. "A lot of women said that it frequently made them question what they were doing with their lives and wonder if they should be doing something else."

Equal opportunities campaigners described Dr Melamed's research as unhelpful. Ann Chant, director of Opportunity 2000, the national campaign started in 1991 to increase the quality and quantity of women's participation in the workforce, said: "Our campaign research and our own member companies' experience shows that it is absolutely not the case that women have to behave like men to succeed. Women and men have very different styles, each of which can be very valuable. Surely a mix of styles is the most valuable."



The refrigerated lorry being used as a temporary mortuary by the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital

Dobson fears NHS could not cope with flu epidemic

Warning as hospital hires mobile mortuary, reports Ian Murray

WINNER pressures and cancelling all but urgent operations: the outbreak is still far from reaching epidemic proportions. New figures due out, possibly today, are expected to show an increase in numbers of flu victims, but they will still be well below the official epidemic level of 400 cases per 100,000 people seen by doctors in a week.

Mr Dobson admitted that the NHS was under severe pressure. Staff were at full stretch, doing an excellent job of handling high numbers of cases, he said, but, if there were an epidemic, "it would be very difficult to cope".

A diesel-powered mobile cold store has been fitted out for the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital with racks for 36 bodies. It is expected to be needed for at least another two weeks to cope with an unusually high number of deaths, particularly among frail, elderly people, who are especially susceptible to flu. The hospital, which has

cancelled all non-emergency operations to make the maximum number of beds available for flu patients, has been warned that eight out of ten families in the Norfolk area are likely to develop flu, cold or cough symptoms this winter.

The holiday period has made the situation worse because fewer funerals have taken place. Peter Moffat, spokesman for the hospital, said: "The rise in the number of deaths coincided with fewer funeral directors arriving at the hospital to collect bodies for burial and cremation. We ran out of capacity in our mortuary so we had to bring in a temporary mobile refrigerated unit to help with cold storage."

Malcolm Stamp, chief executive of the hospital trust, said: "The public can be assured that the deceased are treated with the utmost respect by our staff, who are working under extreme pressure. The hospital has a purpose-built room for relatives and friends to view

bodies and all families will receive the same level of advice."

As the number of cases begins to rise, many other hospitals have taken the precaution of cancelling all but emergency operations. Among those doing so is New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton, where many staff have been working double shifts throughout the holiday, and all hospitals in the Sandwell Health Authority area in the West Midlands. Walsall Manor Hospital has 278 emergency admissions over four days, 100 more than on the same week a year ago.

However, in the North West of England, things are improving. A spokesman for the regional health authority said: "It is still extremely busy, with a lot of sickness about, but the severe pressure of last week does appear to be easing."

Mr Dobson yesterday gave details of the 2,200 schemes for handling winter pressures that will be funded by the £159 million announced in November. Many focus on helping the frail and elderly and include funding for community nurses and emergency response teams.

Blood stocks at record low

By Ian Murray
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

STOCKS of blood held by the National Blood Authority are at a dangerously low level, with supplies of O group — the most common — lower than at any time since the creation of the authority in 1993.

For the first time the authority has taken television advertising in an attempt to attract the donors it needs to provide

the 10,000 units of blood that are needed every day. At present it holds only 14,832 units — less than 1½ days' supply — and demand is outstripping supply. Reserves fell by 2,500 units in the 24 hours up to yesterday morning.

The shortage of O-group supplies is particularly worrying. Although 46 per cent of the population needs this group, there are only 3,098 units in the available stocks.

Supplies of O-group negative, which 7 per cent of the population has, are down to 797 units.

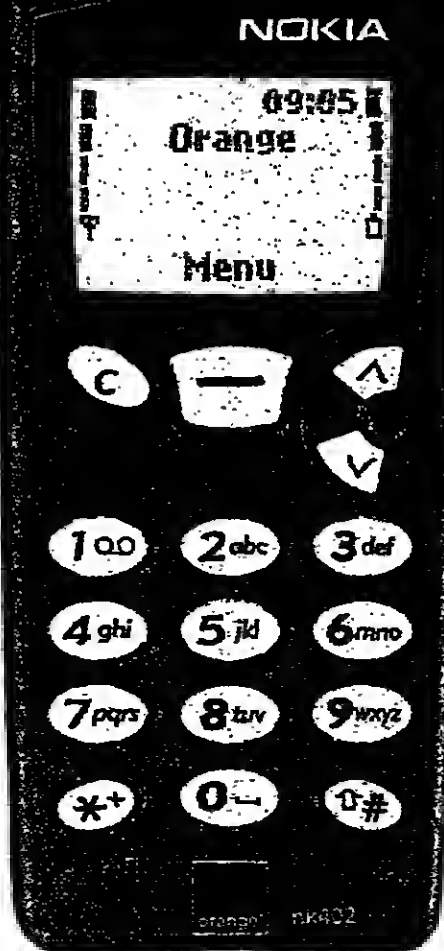
The £1 million television advertising campaign comes as the latest figures show that less than 6 per cent of the eligible population (3.5 million people) gives blood. Supplies of blood keep for up to a month, and most hospitals have a small stock. But unless new donors are found quickly, operations will have to be cancelled.

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Villagers save their green from bulldozers

Helen Johnstone on campaign that raised £350,000 in just over a year

VILLAGERS have saved a medieval green from development after their campaign, backed by the Prince of Wales, raised the £350,000 needed to buy it in just over a year.

Residents in Kingsland, Herefordshire, which has a population of 1,000 and dates from the 7th century, were incensed at plans for 13 houses and parking for 34 cars, obstructing views of the adjoining 12th-century castle and 13th-century church.

They sold everything from marmalade to manure to raise the £350,000, which they reached with the aid of a bank loan of £94,000 and interest-free loans totalling £120,000. The remainder was raised through events organised by the Kingsland Millennium Green Trust. The Prince donated a set of table mats, which raised £125 at one auction, and the Bishop of Hereford, the Right Rev John Oliver, offered lunch at the House of Lords.

Workmen had already begun excavating 600 tonnes of soil

from the 1½-acre site when a group of local businessmen approached the Birmingham-based developers, Beches Two, with a plan to buy it back for the village. They were given a week to gauge local opinion, which resulted in 98 per cent of residents supporting their plan.

Within 24 hours Patricia Pethercray, 51, organised a public meeting, at which it was agreed to ask the developer to allow a month for a proposal to be put together. She said yesterday: "I'd heard about the plans to put up a housing estate a few weeks earlier, and I was incensed. I thought that the best way to save the green would be to buy it, but I had no idea how to do it."

The Countryside Commission backed the project with a grant of £55,000 from the Millennium Green Fund; other donations from environmental trusts totalled £42,000. Jim Langridge, of the Midlands



Katie Eastaugh, left, with other members of the Kingsland Millennium Green Trust, which raised £350,000 to buy the village green from developers

branch of the Countryside Commission, said yesterday: "We had more than 100 applications for grants from the Millennium Green Fund, but we found that this bid was one of the more businesslike and organised. Plus, we couldn't help but be impressed by the villagers' enthusiasm and energy. Normally it takes two to three

months to put a bid together, but these ladies did it in a couple of weeks."

Mrs Pethercray, chairman of the trust and an education consultant who has lived in the village for 16 years, said people had been prepared to sit in front of the bulldozers to save the green, one of few remaining green sites within the

village. "By October we'd held about 40 fundraising events which raised £12,000, and after seven months we had raised £212,000."

"Prince Charles donated a set of table mats depicting some of his paintings, and a friend at the BBC took four people on a tour of the studios for £320. We're probably the

last bastion of old-fashioned rural life in Herefordshire and we want it to stay that way."

She added that villagers had to continue fundraising to repay the money owed.

Katie Eastaugh, 31, a trustee, said yesterday: "The green appeared as an orchard on maps going back to the 16th century. We've been told by local histo-

rians that the green must have been there since the village was founded."

Stuart Harper, managing director of Beches Two, said: "I doubted they would succeed in raising that kind of money."

He added: "I take my hat off to them. We've lost a site, but we made an acceptable return."

Viewers like new look of TV news

By CAROL MIDDLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

REVAMPED versions of the heavyweight television news programmes, *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News*, attracted nearly half a million more viewers this week.

BBC2's *Newsnight*, which has been redesigned to give a more viewer-friendly look, improved its ratings from an average 1.1 million to 1.4 million when it unveiled its new image on Monday night. On the same night, *Channel 4 News*, whose set has undergone a facelift that includes purple sofas and orange desks, attracted 900,000 viewers compared with its usual 800,000.

The BBC and ITV both claimed victory in the ratings for news programmes during 1998. Broadcasters' Audience Research Board figures show that the BBC's *Six O'Clock News* was the most popular programme, with an average of 5.8 million viewers. ITN's early evening news programme attracted 4.3 million.

However, ITN's *News at Ten*, to be axed in the next few weeks, proved to be the most popular nightly news programme with an average audience of 5.7 million. This compared with 5.2 million for the *Nine O'Clock News*.

Vanessa Feltz, who left ITV for the BBC after being refused a salary of £2.5 million, attracted under a million viewers when *The Vanessa Show* was launched on Monday.

Big Brother cleans up 'high-rise slums'

HIGH-TECH surveillance equipment has helped to rejuvenate some of Britain's worst council lower blocks and may have earned a reprieve for others facing demolition.

Brian McGrail, of the Open University, told the Royal Geographical Society - Institute of British Geographers conference in Leicester yesterday that closed-circuit television cameras had had a remarkable effect on estates in Edinburgh and Glasgow that were once seen as high-rise slums made uninhabitable by criminal tenants. On one Edinburgh estate, Gracemount, which has three high-rise blocks, about 40 per cent of tenants left within a year of the cameras being installed because they were using the flats as a base for crime or benefit fraud. However, the flats were quickly relet to more law-abiding tenants, including hard-to-let ground-floor flats, which had been boarded up.

"These blocks were the worst I had seen out the research as part of an Economic and Social Science Research

NIGEL HAWKES at the geographers' conference

Council programme measuring the effects of information technology on society.

"There were graffiti, broken glass and rubbish everywhere. The lifts had been neglected, and the area around the blocks was ugly. When I was last there, in August, everything had changed. Aesthetically it looked a lot better, as the ground floors were let. Previously nobody would live in them. The blocks had been painted, money spent on maintenance, and the tenants were happier."

The technology that makes such changes possible include closed-circuit television cameras, which feed pictures to a concierge, who can also monitor the comings and goings of the tenants by records made every time they use their keys; and a direct link from every flat to the concierge by fibre-optic cable so that tenants can make

immediate contact if problems arise.

The monitoring of movement soon makes it clear if any tenants are not actually living in their flats, but merely using them as "Giro drops", postal addresses for Giro cheques to which they are not entitled. It can also indicate whether a tenant is ill and has not left the block for several days.

"The majority of tenants are in favour of the changes," Dr McGrail said. "Those who aren't have left. Those who live there now say they feel more secure, are more willing to chat to neighbours or get into lifts with strangers."

Most of Britain's tower blocks were built between 1955 and 1974, but disenchantment with them set in in the 1980s. With many planners feeling that the social problems that plagued many of them were incurable, demolition seemed the only option. Some have been knocked down, but the cost of demolition - about £500,000 per block - is often prohibitive.

"Housing departments are reluctant to spend that sort of money when it could be used for the direct benefit of other tenants," Dr McGrail said. Tower blocks are also expensive to run, costing more than they produce in rents, so selling them to private developers is seldom an option.

Dr McGrail believes that the benefits of surveillance technology are such that many tower blocks could now be kept in use for another 30 years or so. While never likely to be the Utopia that some architects envisaged, he said, they did have a future.



Cameras cut crime on Edinburgh's Gracemount estate

Pitfalls of flexible hours

FLEXIBLE working patterns, which the Government sees as the key to preserving family life, result in people seeing less of their families than before, the conference was told.

Diane Perrons, of the London School of Economics, studied patterns of work in supermarkets for the European Commission and found that, while flexible working gave many advantages to employers, reducing overtime payments and National Insurance costs, the benefits to those employed were less apparent.

On the positive side, it gave women an opportunity to get into the labour force, with working hours that enabled them to look after their children. The drawback was that parents never had any time to spend together. "One comes home and the other goes off," Dr Perrons said.

Ice Age may be 50,000 years late

MANMADE global warming may postpone the arrival of the next Ice Age, the conference was told. Instead of ice spreading down across Scotland and the North of England within the next 55,000 years, the deep freeze may be delayed for a further 50,000 years or more, Paul Burgess, of the University of East Anglia, said.

The ice will certainly come, however, as a result of changes in the Earth's orbit, tilt and precession - the process by which the seasons shift slowly over time.

Using a computer model developed at the University of Louvain in Belgium, Mr Burgess and his colleagues Jean Palutikof and Clare Goodess combined these long-term cycles with the burning of fossil fuels, which produces the carbon dioxide that contributes to global warming.

Mr Burgess said that, using carbon dioxide levels found in ice cores, the model correctly identified the extent of the last

glacial maximum, when ice spread over Scotland and much of northern England and Wales.

Given natural levels of carbon dioxide, the model predicts a similar ice coverage in 55,000 to 60,000 years. Factoring in manmade global warming at moderate levels delays the growth of ice, but when growth starts it is much swifter and a complete glaciation is achieved on the same time-scale.

Only if extreme global warming is assumed is there any delay to glaciation, but it will still occur about 110,000 years from now.



<http://www.geog.le.ac.uk>
Conference programme on the Leicester University Geography Department website
<http://www.rgs.org> The Royal Geographical Society - Institute of British Geographers site



BRADFORD
& BINGLEY
BUILDING SOCIETY

Important Notice to Members from your Board of Directors

We have received a Members' resolution calling on us to take steps to convert your Building Society from a Mutual into a Plc (public company) Bank.

As the resolution has been endorsed by the required 50 Members it will be put to your vote as part of our Annual General Meeting (AGM) next April. Members should be aware that, by law, the resolution can only be used to guide the Board. It is not binding.

Your Board is unanimous in its conviction that becoming a Bank is not in the interest of our 2.5 million current Members and their successors.

If we were to become a Bank we would have to raise mortgage rates and drop savings rates to pay dividends to the Bank's shareholders.

In the weeks ahead we will be writing to you to:

- Explain why staying mutual makes sense
- Outline plans for the future, and
- Encourage you to participate in the Society's future by voting on this important AGM issue


Because the Members' resolution could encourage "carpetbaggers" to swamp our offices we have decided not to accept new savings Members until after our AGM.

We will continue to serve our existing Members and welcome new customers for mortgages and independent financial advice.

Lindsay Mackinlay
Chairman



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The Freestyle Mortgage is truly flexible. When you can afford it you can make lump sum or extra monthly payments at any time to pay off your mortgage earlier, which saves you money. If you need to, you can borrow back any overpayments you have made. You can even

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Flexible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to two payment holidays each year. Ability to pay off more quickly - by additional monthly or lump sum payments.
Simple to Sign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal agreement and quote in a matter of minutes. Completed paperwork - all you have to do is sign.

take up to two monthly payment holidays each year.

Freestyle makes it easy for you to switch

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We offer a highly competitive variable rate with a 2% discounted rate of 4.80% (APR 6.90%) for the first six months of your mortgage. Interest is calculated daily, so you save money and get a fairer deal.

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multiples, so you can usually borrow more than you need. The surplus can be borrowed at any time for any purpose, allowing you a cheaper method of borrowing money.

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We can give a quote in a matter of minutes. So, if you want to switch your existing mortgage or are moving house, speak to your Financial Adviser or call us now. It couldn't be simpler.

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Repayments are shown gross of MIBKs. Payment holidays will be allowed after the first 6 monthly payments have been made and discounted product, so early settlement charges will be payable on the Standard Variable Rate. We will be payable in subscription within the first 12 months. The APR is based on the current Bank of England Variable Rate including any discounted period. Repayments are shown gross of MIBKs. Payment holidays will be allowed after the first 6 monthly payments have been made and discounted product, so early settlement charges will be payable on the Standard Variable Rate. We will be payable in subscription within the first 12 months. The APR is based on the current Bank of England Variable Rate including any discounted period. Repayments are shown gross of MIBKs. Payment holidays will be allowed after the first 6 monthly payments have been made and discounted product, so early settlement charges will be payable on the Standard Variable Rate. 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Hans Joachim Klein, German Euro-MP, 'may face charge'

Euro-MP 'may face charge'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE former Socialist student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit, 53, who heads the French Greens' list of candidates for June's European elections, may face a legal investigation for allegedly aiding a fugitive.

Hans Joachim Klein, suspected of helping the terrorist Carlos the Jackal (Ilich Ramirez Sanchez), was arrested in France in August after 20 years on the run and faces extradition to Germany.

Herr Cohn-Bendit, 53, now a German Euro-MP, has admitted providing him with assistance. Prosecutors in Frankfurt plan to apply to have his parliamentary immunity lifted, a necessary precursor to any investigation.

Germans urge 'aloof' Britain to join euro

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

BRITAIN should get off its "high horse" and join the euro, according to the German press, echoing the confidence of the Bonn Government that the Blair Administration will sign up for the single European currency sooner rather than later.

The sentiment was clear in both the tabloid and the broadsheet press, but it was expressed with a curious lip-curling contempt by the mass-circulation *Bild* newspaper which has in the past entertained its own doubts about the euro.

"The British in their fine pin-stripes did not want to get their hands dirty while we were toiling away on the construction of the euro," said the newspaper's main economics commentator. "Our pound is staying out, they said with stiff upper lip."

Now Britain had to make its choice. "The pound is losing ground against the euro, companies cannot plan ahead, their stock looks shaky. Big capital, behaving like a tree full of ravens, is fluttering out of the island and billions are leaving London in the direction of euroland."

The British had climbed

proudly on their high horse, the paper declared, but now they should dismount.

These seemed to be rather strong conclusions to draw on the basis of one day's euro trading. By German, though not of course by British, tabloid standards, this was tough talk. But even the shrewd commentator of *Handelsblatt*, Germany's sober business daily, was calculating that Britain would have to jump much quicker than expected.

"Caught between the two huge blocks of the euro and the dollar, the British economy (which reacts sensitively to exchange rates) could soon lead to a hasty and spontaneous British entry into the European monetary union," the paper said.

The *Stuttgart Zeitung*, usually well informed on finance ministry affairs, said: "London is isolated." Above all, it said: "British industry runs the risk of falling behind in the future race for investment... even if the new currency proves to be soft and prone to crisis this will not help Britain, because a weak euro would mean a tangible increase in the value of the pound and worse export opportunities for

British businesses... every day the pressure grows to give up the senseless opposition."

To some degree, these comments reflect the triumphalism of a good start and relief that the beginning of the euro was not a fiasco. But they also revealed the mood of Gerhard Schröder's Government — and above all of Oskar Lafontaine, his Finance Minister — who are convinced that Britain will not be able to resist the pressure of events in continental Europe.

Some nervousness about the future evolution of the European economy could be detected yesterday. Heiner Flassbeck, Herr Lafontaine's right-hand man at the Finance Ministry, said he was satisfied with the smooth start of the euro. But he was far from optimistic about Europe's overall economic prospects.

A strong economic downturn in Europe would, he said, lead to higher unemployment. Domestic consumption had to be encouraged in order to boost the economy, he said, adding that no attempt should be made to increase state expenditure.

Leading article, page 17



Bathers enjoy a walk in the sun yesterday at Biarritz in southwest France, where temperatures topped 70F (20C). Paris recorded a January record of 59F (16C), but farmers were anxious over their crops and ski resort owners were praying for snow.

Nuclear waste 'to bankroll Lebed campaign'

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

WITH a year to go until Russian presidential elections if Boris Yeltsin sees out his full term, it has been suggested that Aleksandr Lebed, the gruff Governor of Krasnoyarsk, might be attempting to raise money for his campaign by insisting that his Krasnoyarsk gubernatorial Foundation be the mediator through which Ukraine would pay Russia for the disposal of nuclear waste.

Sogodnya, newspaper reports, in an article called *The Temptation of Nuclear Profits*, that \$69 million (£40 million) allocated by the Ukrainian Government for the storage and processing of waste in the Krasnoyarsk area has gone missing. The money, to be precise, probably never existed because Atomenergoproekt, the Ukrainian nuclear engineering company, is supposed to pay a mere 15 per cent of the sum due in cash.

Mr Lebed complains that the goods, services and IDs that make up the rest of the payment always arrive late and never in full.

The agreement is that the Zheleznogorsk iron processing factory in Krasnoyarsk accepts 250 tonnes of nuclear waste per year at a fee of \$275 per kilo. "By recycling one kilogram of used nuclear fuel, one can earn up to \$1,000," Yevgeni Adamov told deputies of the Krasnoyarsk territorial legislature yesterday, suggesting that there is an urgent need to bring payments into line with the rest of the world.

Mr Lebed has elected to hold Ukraine to ransom on the issue and is refusing to accept any more nuclear waste until the debt is paid at a reasonable rate.

He also insists that his foundation must mediate in the affair, according to information obtained by *Sogodnya*. As the waste piles up, experts agree that a concentration of nuclear material can result in "catastrophic incidents".



Lebed: chose to hold Ukraine to ransom

Goggle box drives ape family apart

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

A TELEVISION, intended to provide help for an orang-utan couple in St Petersburg Zoo, has turned them into telly addicts, the *Moscow Times* reported yesterday.

Monika and Rabu had failed to be model parents to their male baby, Ramon, so a Samsung executive, himself a new father, gave the set in the hope that educational videos might teach the orang-utans how to care for their offspring.

Rabu, the family's patriarch, has become so obsessed with the television, which hangs outside his cage that he has started to ignore his mate, who in turn is feeling rejected and miserable. Zoo officials have now curtailed viewing hours, in the hope that Rabu will regain his attentive nature and that Monika will resume her painting career, cast aside in favour of the box.

Aleksandr Karpov, chief psychologist at the Russian Ministry of Health, admitted

that any addition to a lifeless object "can easily result in a strong separation from reality". He added that anyone who spends a disproportionate amount of time watching television or playing computer games is likely to cut himself off from communication with others, including his own family, and he may become a defective personality with one-sided development.

Rabu arrived in St Petersburg from Antwerp Zoo in 1971 and he and Monika had their offspring, on November 20. However, being reared in captivity both parents had lost the nurturing instincts necessary to raise their baby, so he was removed to an incubator where he was fed and looked after by zoo staff.

The zoo plans to appeal to American primate centres for help. It also hopes to bring in human mothers to demonstrate their skills to the hapless orang-utan.

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Cook cash for war on rebels in Sierra Leone

London backs Freetown regime with extra £1m to Nigerian-led force, writes Michael Binyon

BRITAIN yesterday announced that it was giving an extra £1 million to support the Nigerian-led forces fighting the rebels in Sierra Leone. The money will pay for lorries, communications and logistical back-up, but not for arms.

The Foreign Office's announcement came as Nigerian warplanes killed more than 200 rebels threatening Freetown, the capital. On Sunday Alpha jets in service with the Ecomog intervention force attacked a mountain cave hide-out near Hastings, on the outskirts of Freetown, killing at least 100 fighters from the Revolutionary United Front and the United Front. Planes were also in action north of the capital and Ecomog troops retook control of the nearby town of Freetown.

Britain's aid package is part of a commitment to bolster the Kabbah Government of President Kabbah, restored last year with the help of arms and private forces provided by the United Nations, the Ecomog group.

The defeated junta, which fled into the bush, maiming a terrorising civilians, has joined forces with the RUF and during the past two weeks has made sweeping gains, threatening the capital and the Government.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that there was no longer any arms embargo on the Sierra Leone Government, following the modification by the United Nations of an earlier blanket embargo. But Britain still operates an arms embargo on Nigeria, which provides the bulk of the Ecomog forces.

Given the tight Foreign Office budget, the military aid is

considerable and follows the £2 million already paid to a United Nations Trust Fund supporting Ecomog. The total, larger than most British humanitarian packages, reflects Britain's determination to keep in office a democratic Government that has already caused Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, considerable embarrassment over the Sandline affair. Tony Lloyd, the Foreign Office Minister responsible for Africa, said that the aid was "a demonstration of our commitment to help bring stability to Sierra Leone and promote democracy both in that country and more widely in Africa".

On Monday, Nigerian troops, backed by Sierra Leonean civilian militia, beat back a rebel attempt to enter Freetown via Hastings. The rebel force of more than 1,000 men had reached the eastern city gates, and Ecomog sources said many were infiltrators in civilian clothes who had slipped past Hastings.

The rebels split into two groups after the first attack, one comprising renegade soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army and the other made up of RUF fighters who have been harrying successive Gov-

ernments for more than five years.

Insurgents still control most of the north of the country, and have conscripted thousands of able-bodied men and women, training them to fight. A systematic campaign of mutilation, hacking off the arms and legs of captured civilians, has left many villagers terrified of the rebels and unable to resist them. Those fleeing to Freetown have reported summary executions of people the rebels consider sympathetic to the Kabbah Government.

A Rome-based Catholic news agency yesterday reported that one of the leaders of the ousted junta, Solomon Anthony James Musa, was killed in the recent fighting. He was the de facto Prime Minister of the junta which seized power in May 1997 and was ousted last February.

The rebel forces were swiftly pushed back after President Kabbah was reinstated. But they regrouped and launched a new campaign after their leader, Freddy Sankoh, was sentenced to death for treason in October. In prison in Freetown, he is appealing against the sentence.

The upsurge in fighting threatens to unleash a new wave of refugees, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Tuesday. A spokesman said that more than 100 refugees have fled into neighbouring Guinea over the past few days. But 5,800 more people in the border area of Kambia are poised to follow suit if clashes between rebels and the intervention force continue. An estimated 250,000 people are displaced within Sierra Leone.



President Mugabe, angered by his treatment in London, is now calling for seizure of farms owned by absentee lords. "They will lose their little Englands," he said

Mugabe wants to grab 'lands of British lords'

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

PRESIDENT MUGABE has promised to seize farms owned by absentee British aristocrats and says he will pay with an "IOU".

"Those British lords who have their little Englands and are absentee landlords will lose their little Englands," he was quoted as saying yesterday in the state-controlled *Newsday* newspaper. Compensating was the responsibility of the British Government, the colonisers of what was formerly Rhodesia, he said.

But Mr Mugabe, whose Government last month confiscated 841 white-owned farms in Zimbabwe, is talking about an era long past. The big landowners, such as the Salisbury, Cranborne, and Cecil families, sold their holdings around independence in 1980 and left.

The President, still smarting from his visit to London last month where the media denounced him as a tyrant, also made ominous references

to the estimated 400 British companies in Zimbabwe. They controlled "a large portion" of the economy, and every year sent millions of pounds in profits to Britain.

British companies should give shares in their Zimbabwean businesses to black Zimbabweans, as part of the Government's plan to "indigenise" the economy, he said. Black empowerment in Zimbabwe has become synonymous with cronyism and corruption, where the conspicuous wealth of the friends and relatives surrounding Mr Mugabe continues to swell in contrast to the widespread poverty and crumbling infrastructure that affects the rest of the country.

Mr Mugabe said Britain ought to be supporting his land reform and black empowerment programmes, instead of "leading the bandwagon of criticism and malicious statements" aimed at tarnishing the country's image abroad.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Millennium unit set up by Israel

Jerusalem: Israel yesterday unveiled sweeping plans for coping with so-called "messianic madness" among Christian pilgrims arriving in the Holy Land for millennium celebrations (Christopher Walker writes).

It is estimated that some 40,000 of the expected 4.5 million visitors will require psychiatric help, with 800 needing to be treated in mental hospitals. Leading agents from Shin Bet and Mossad, the Israeli domestic and foreign secret services, have been recruited into a new unit to deal with millennial cults and individuals who believe they are biblical figures.

Cash for Stasi boss

Berlin: Erich Mielke, 91, once head of East Germany's secret police, has got about £1,000 (£714) compensation for his three months in jail in 1991. Herr Mielke was accused of shooting people at the Berlin Wall, but was found too ill to stand trial. He was jailed for six years in 1993 for the 1931 murder of two policemen but was freed as senile in August 1995. (AFP)

Korean actress flees

Seoul: Kim Hye Young, right, a popular North Korean film star, has defected to South Korea with her family. She, her parents and two sisters arrived in August but the defection was kept secret to protect their safety. Kim Hye Young, 26, who was in the Pyongyang national theatre troupe, has starred in seven films. (AFP)



Death row killing

Parchman: Donald Leroy Evans, a drifter who claimed to have killed dozens of people in 22 states, was stabbed to death by a fellow death row inmate at Mississippi State Penitentiary here. Evans, 41, sentenced for strangling a girl aged ten, won notoriety after his 1991 arrest, saying he was a serial killer, but he later said the confessions were a hoax. (AP)

Coin smuggler held

Budapest: Hungarian customs officials have arrested a Bulgarian citizen trying to smuggle ancient Greek, Roman, Thracian and Syrian coins, worth more than £37,000, to Britain. The 1,567 bronze and silver coins, dating from 3BC, were found in a bag hidden behind the car stereo of the man, who was trying to enter Austria with a false passport. (AFP)

Bullring ban sought

Madrid: The Madrid regional government's top official for children's rights wants bullfights declared off-limits for those under 14, saying that youngsters can be traumatised by watching bulls bleed to death. The proposal would make the region the second in Spain to bar young children from arena bullfights. Catalonia, in the northeast, did so last month. (AP)

Brief encounters

Bucharest: A wife given lacey underwear for her 35th birthday that was too small, became suspicious when a woman guest at her party said she had received some that was too large. The next day a shop assistant confirmed that her husband had bought two sets of lingerie. After swapping underwear with "the other woman", she filed for divorce. (AP)

Law chief says police injured Anwar

FROM AGENCY FRANCE PRESSE IN KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIAN police inflicted the injuries on Anwar Ibrahim, the former Deputy Prime Minister, that drew international condemnation after his detention, the authorities admitted yesterday.

A statement by Mohd Abdullah, the Attorney-General, was released as Mr Anwar's corruption trial was told that semen stains on a mattress being used in evidence against him could have been planted.

Mr Mohd said that he had found the police "fully responsible" for injuries suffered by

Mr Anwar in September, when the former leader was in police custody. But the person responsible had not been identified. Mr Mohd's statement, reported by the Bernama news agency, added that medical reports indicated that he had suffered some of his injuries before he was arrested.

Mr Anwar was dismissed on September 2 and arrested 18 days later. He had a black eye when produced for his first court appearance and said he had been beaten unconscious on his first night in custody.



Anwar: The police "fully responsible for attack"

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Yemen terror imperils port deal

FROM DANIEL MCGRODY IN ADEN

AMERICAN military chiefs fear the recent terrorist violence in Yemen may jeopardise their secret deal to establish an important shipping base at Aden.

The Pentagon plans to use the former British colony to bunker 600,000 barrels of marine diesel and aviation fuel which will be used to service its naval operation in the Gulf against President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

As the first US warship docked in Aden under the deal, Scotland Yard detectives and the FBI were working yes-

terday to discover who was behind the Islamic group that kidnapped 16 Western tourists and was planning to bomb five British targets in the port city.

One senior US official said: "This eruption of Islamic terrorism in Yemen could not have come at a worse time, when we are considering hundreds of American military personnel walking around Aden on shore leave."

The priority for the ten-man FBI team sent to Yemen is to discover whether the al-Jihad group is trained and funded

by the Saudi billionaire, Osama bin Laden, accused by Washington of various terrorist outrages.

FBI sources say they are certain that bin Laden has bases in mountainous southern Yemen where his terrorists fled after being forced out of Sudan and Afghanistan in the past

seven months.

It has also been disclosed that US intelligence agents were warned six weeks ago that Hamas was planning to shift its headquarters from Khartoum to Yemen. A week later an armed gang shot an American aid worker in an ambush outside his home which

is near where the kidnap of the tour group took place. One of the gunmen who escaped after wounding Rich Bonney is said to have also taken part in last week's shootout in the desert in which four hostages, including three Britons, were killed.

The Pentagon's ambitions for Aden will depend on the

FBI's findings, although naval chiefs did decide to go ahead with plans for the frigate, USS Klakring, to dock off Aden's Prince of Wales pier, built by the British in 1919. None of the crew was allowed off the frigate which was returning from the Gulf. As she docked amid strict security, an Iranian tanker passed close by.

Until the British left in 1967, Aden was the world's second busiest port. It was a coaling station for ships sailing to India and the Far East and its natural deep waters can berth the biggest aircraft carriers.

The US Navy needs the port because it is closing its operation at Djibouti and the Pentagon is worried about the future use of bases in Gulf

states, including Saudi Arabia. The fuel bunker is being constructed by British technicians next to the terminal for the new Aden freeport that will open in March. The US base should have been operating by now, but the first fuel is not due in the tanks until next month.

The Americans also want to refurbish a nearby refinery so that it can produce the quality of marine diesel and aviation fuel they need to store.

American sources said that they will review plans to allow sailors and airmen shore leave during daylight; the decision will upset local traders and bar owners who had expected business not seen since the British occupation.

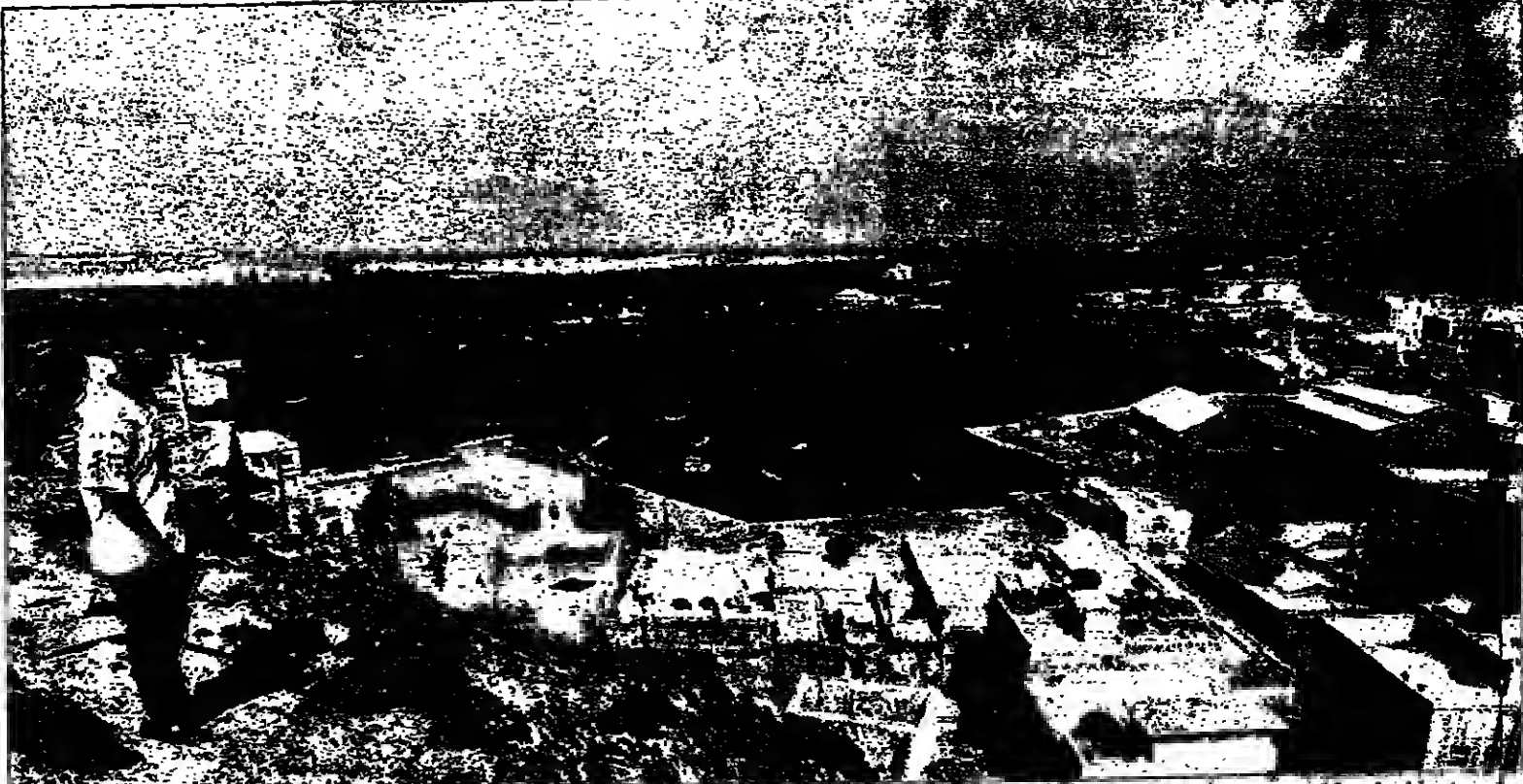
American security officials, conscious of the security threat in the region, wanted to train units of Yemeni troops in hostage rescue, but were forbidden to do so by American diplomats concerned about the

Sanaa Government's human rights record. Washington was also impressed by Yemen's recent criticism of Operation Desert Storm against Saddam. US officials thought that President Salhi's Government had learnt its lesson after condemning the Gulf War and then seeing to million Yemenis expelled from Gulf states and the cutting of Western aid.

British authorities are believed to have asked Yemen about using its former barracks at Fuqum in Little Aden as the West seeks bases in the Gulf. After the diplomatic wrangles of the past week over the conduct of the bungled kidnap rescue, two senior Scotland Yard detectives from an

anti-terrorist squad together with a British criminal, David Pearce, had discussions with Tah A. b. m. e. Ghanem, the Governor of Aden. The focus of the investigation will be

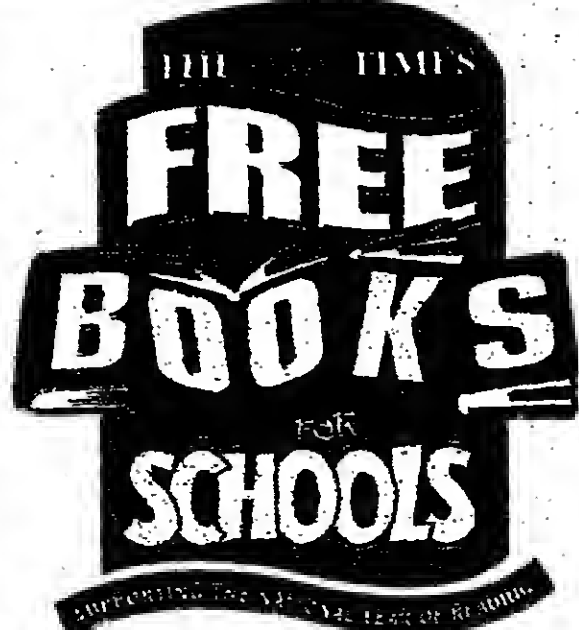
question Abu Hassan, a jailed kidnap leader, and the terrorists arrested in Aden using fake British passports. They were said to be about launch bomb attacks on five targets, including the British consulate and the Anglican church. They said that the investigation will take time as urged, the authorities not proceed with its plans to convict and execute Hassan and Victor Henderson, the British Ambassador, met Hussein Mohammed Arab, the Yemeni Interior Minister, yesterday about the investigation. Henderson denied reports that British ministers had said that they will block Yemen's application to join the Commonwealth because of its handling of the kidnap incident.



Aden port where the US Navy has organised a refuelling base, an arrangement thrown into doubt by the recent hostage-taking incident

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Iran group renews threat to Rushdie

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

SALMAN Rushdie's life is under renewed threat from a shadowy, well-organised Iranian extremist group that has claimed responsibility for the recent murders of four dissidents and an attack on American tourists, a moderate Iranian newspaper said yesterday.

Zan, a usually well-informed woman's daily, said that the little-known Fedayeen (Devotees) of Pure Mohammedan Islam was "preparing to put into effect the historic fatwa" of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, who condemned the author to death in 1989 for alleged blasphemy in his novel, *The Satanic Verses*.

The group released a statement saying that it is using "all means at its disposal to plan the application of the fat-

wa". Zan said. It added that the group had repeated an earlier claim that it had killed two secular writers and Dasush Foruhar, the national leader, and his wife, Parvazeh Eskandari. The group structure is said to include judicial section run by three judges. Zan added.

While any threat to Rushdie will be taken seriously, too little is known about the group to gauge the level of danger. "To what extent it real or invented simply cause problems for Iran's international relations is unclear," an Iranian analyst said. "Assuming it does exist and did carry out the murders here, there is no way of knowing whether it has the capacity to act abroad."

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CHANGING TIMES

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Ventura speaking at his inauguration ceremony

Mayor wrestles with new career

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE speech lasted just 11 minutes, but the party is scheduled to go on for a fortnight. Despite deep snow and Minnesota's customary bitter January temperatures, an unprecedented two-week gala is under way to welcome the state's new Governor, Jesse Ventura, a 250lb human battling rain who once ruled the professional wrestling circuit in a pink feather hat.

But the glow is already fading from Mr Ventura's halo. Having campaigned as an Independent last November with rancorous, ad-libbed attacks on both his rivals and the status quo, he has already back-pedalled on a pledge to return a \$33 billion (£2 billion) state budget surplus to taxpayers. Instead, he has said he will be "prudent" — not a word his supporters, most of them disenchanted with the major parties, had hoped to hear so soon.

Mr Ventura has also swapped his flannel shirts and snow boots for sober charcoal suits and has accepted the gubernatorial perk of a chauffeur-driven limousine. He used to ride a Harley, but Mrs Ventura, who begged him not to run, did appear at his inauguration ceremony in St Paul, the state capital.

Minnesota's inaugural festivities will reach their climax on January 16, not with a glittering ball but a "people's celebration" for which tickets are already on sale, starting at \$10.

Clinton relaxes trade embargo on Cuba

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton has loosened the United States' long-standing trade embargo with Cuba to allow more movement of people and money between the two countries.

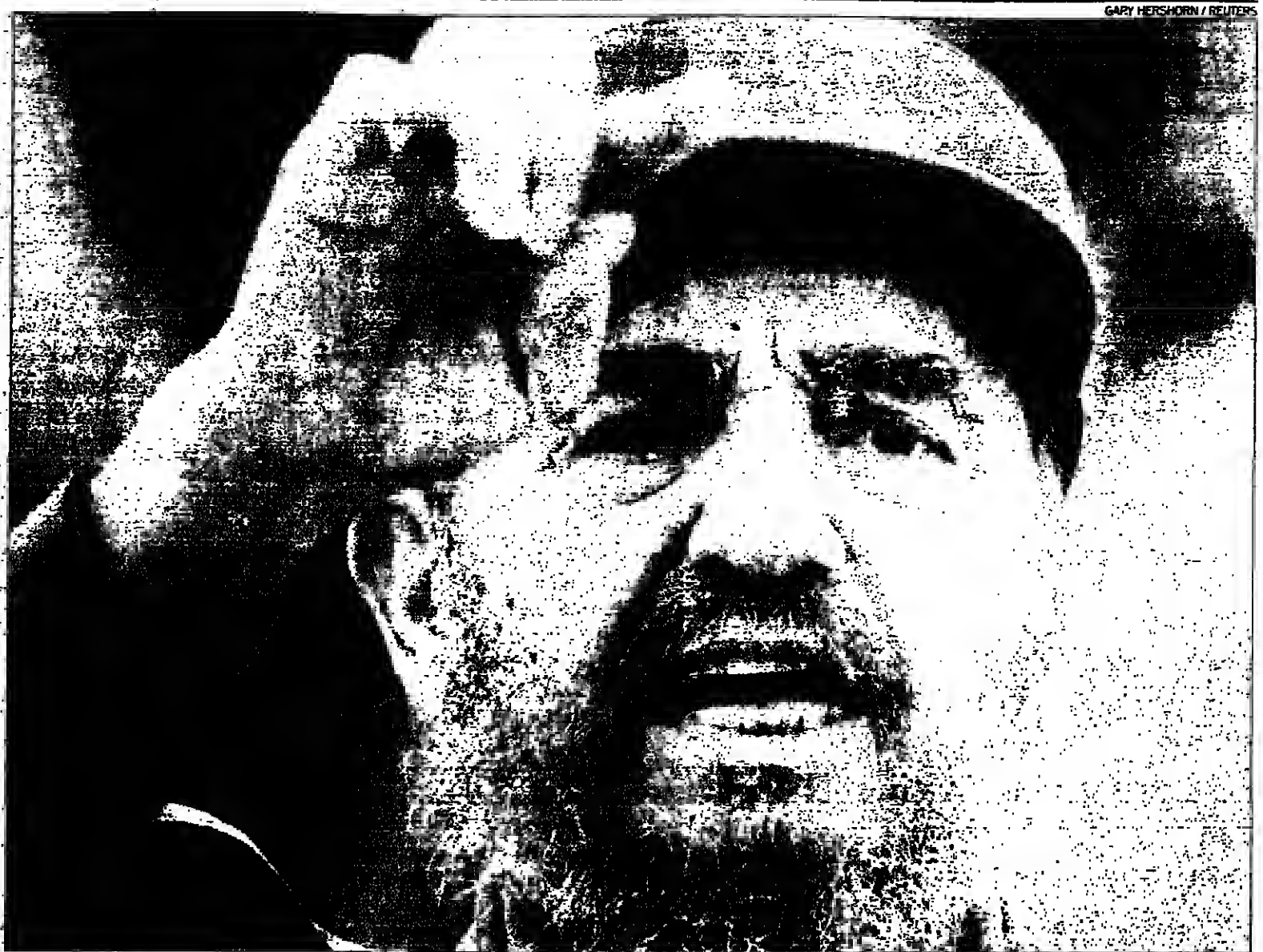
While insisting America is still hostile to President Castro's regime, the White House hopes to "strengthen support for the Cuban people".

Under the new rules, Cubans will be allowed to receive cash from any individual in the US, sales of food and agricultural products will be permitted for the first time on a limited basis, a direct mail service will be reintroduced and there will be an expansion of US charter flights in and out of the island.

And, in a move echoing the Sino-Soviet "détente" that helped to improve relations with China in the 1970s, the Baltimore Orioles baseball team is to explore the possibility of home and away games against the Cuban national team later this year.

There was no immediate reaction in Havana to President Clinton's announcement. Alejandro González, a Foreign Ministry official there, said: "We have only seen press reports on this subject. We do not have an official statement from the North American Government on this, so for now we do not have any reactions."

The White House stopped short of a full review of American policy towards Cuba, called for by a bipartisan group of senators. Nevertheless, the move has been attacked by the initiative's fiercest



President Castro and his Communist regime are not intended to benefit from Washington's new measures which aim to "help the Cuban people"

opponents, including the mass exodus of Cubans to Florida in 1994 and the shooting down by two Cuban MiG jet fighters of four unarmed, Miami-based planes north of the island in 1996. However, the Pope's visit to Cuba a year ago has made it easier for the Administration to introduce innovations.

Officials insist the policy shifts help to promote democracy without helping President Castro. A year ago all cash transfers from US residents to "needy" Cubans were barred.

In March, Mr Clinton allowed Cuban-Americans to send up to \$1,200 (about £723) a year to relatives. That restriction is to be eased further, permitting any US resident to send money to the island up to the \$1,200 annual limit.

Until 1993, President Castro barred Cubans from holding dollars, seeing it as a "reminiscence of past abuses". But with the Cuban economy in free fall, cash payments



Castro addressing supporters in 1959, days after his predecessor, President Batista, fled the country

to family members are believed to have spared countless Cubans from destitution and allowed many to set up private businesses, something unheard of a few years ago.

Cuban co-operation will be required in some areas, particularly the plan for increased exchanges. An early test will come when a delegation from

go to independent charities aimed at assisting Cubans.

Currently mail deliveries between the countries are possible but often take months. The proposal for a direct service comes after a significant expansion of US-Cuban telephone communications earlier in the decade, made possible by an extensive modernisation programme.

Direct charter flights to Cuba were legal until 1996 when the four Miami-based planes were shot down. Mr Clinton retaliated by banning such flights, but he reinstated them last March. His new proposal contemplates an easing of existing restrictions on such flights, possibly including allowing flights from cities other than Miami.

The sales of food would be to non-governmental organisations and independent restaurants. The decision to reject senators' calls for a commission to review all aspects of US policy towards Cuba disappointed Senator John Warner

of Virginia. He is an embargo opponent who led the drive for the commission and believes that current policy treats Cuba more cruelly than more bona fide threats to America's national security, such as Iraq and North Korea.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, hailed the package as a "major advance in our effort to reach out to the Cuban people."

"Our goal is to encourage the development in Cuba of peaceful civic activities that are independent of the Government and that will help the Cuban people prepare for the day when their country is once again free," she said.

She added that the US shift in policy would "maintain pressure for democratic change" on the island nation while at the same time helping to advance "the dream of a Cuba where all can participate in... political life. We will continue to work with them on constructive ideas to promote democratic change."

Diplomats in US accused of using slave labour

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

SLAVERY lives on in the United States, with diplomats and officials in international organisations often guilty of treating staff like serfs, according to human rights groups.

Some of those alleged to be the worst abusers are foreigners employed at embassies and institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations.

They are accused of bringing in domestic staff from impoverished countries on temporary work visas and then forcing them to toil round the clock, without days off, for poor wages. The servants, mostly women, are often victims of violence but have nowhere and no one to turn to.

Janet Reno, the Attorney General, has launched an investigation, involving the FBI and a clutch of government departments, into what she called the "serious problem of modern-day slavery".

The Washington Post yesterday published a catalogue of alleged abuse in the capital by foreigners who had flouted labour laws.



Reno: ordered inquiry into slavery allegations

One illiterate Ethiopian woman, Yesheharg Teferia, claimed that she worked for a member of staff at the IMF for 90 hours a week for eight years. Although she says she was given a contract for a wage of \$235 (£143) a week, she received just \$1,000 for the entire period, in effect working for 3 cents an hour. She has filed a suit against David Makonnen, her former employer, for back pay and damages.

Mr Makonnen has argued that she is owed nothing because after he left the IMF in 1992 she was a "guest" in his house. "I was not her guest," Ms Teferia said. "I was not even their employee. I was their slave."

The FBI became aware of a 60-year-old woman working for a Brazilian businessman when she entered hospital and told social workers she had to beg neighbours for food but was afraid to run away because she had been told by her employers that she would be arrested for being black.

Canberra: Australia is to expand the scope of proposed new anti-slavery laws aimed particularly at the growing sex slave trade and will increase jail terms to 25 years for the most serious offenders. The federal police have uncovered 14 cases of sexual slavery in the past two years. Australia has not changed its slavery laws for 150 years.

"The legislation will focus on slavery generally and the recruitment of people overseas for sexual servitude," Amanda Vanstone, the Australian Justice Minister, said. (Reuters)

Hollywood 'Indian' dies at 94

BY GILES WHITTELL

IRON Eyes Cody, a veteran actor who claimed to be an Indian and came to symbolise the plight of America's endangered wilderness, has died in Los Angeles after half a century in Hollywood and a youth that remains shrouded in mystery.

He gained fame in an era when Native Americans were called Red Indians, making a career as the noble face of an oppressed people. Two years ago, however, a New Orleans newspaper claimed he was a second-generation Italian American for whom Hollywood provided an escape from his parents' blue-collar grind.

Mr Cody appeared in dozens of pre-war Westerns and worked with such directors as John Ford and Cecil B. De Mille but was best-known for a one-minute commercial first broadcast in 1970 in which he paddled down a river past a belching smokestack and turned to the camera in front of a littered roadside, a single tear rolling down his cheek.

Obituary, page 19

FBI frees youth and arrests kidnap suspects as China holds accomplices

FROM KAREN LOWE IN LOS ANGELES

FBI AGENTS have freed the son of a wealthy Taiwanese businessman held for ransom just as Chinese authorities arrested accomplices in Fuzhou province picking up the money, officials said.

Close co-operation between US and Chinese authorities ensured the capture of kidnappers in Los Angeles on Monday and of those retrieving the ransom in China, said Timothy McNally, FBI assistant director-in-charge, Los Angeles.

"To our knowledge, where we actually had a ransom demand and delivery being conducted, was the first of its kind," he said.

Kuan Nen Chen, 17, a student, was safely reunited with his mother nearly three weeks after he was abducted as he arrived home on December 15. He was climbing out of his car when two men snatched him over his mouth and grabbed him.

A diligent student in the San Marino neighborhood east of Los Angeles, the young man's disappearance went unnoticed for two days. His guardian and neighbour believed he had not seen him because he was studying late.

When he did not show up in school and there was no explanation for his absence, the guardian contacted his parents in Taiwan, according to Gary Isaacs, the San Marino police chief. They immediately contacted the police.

The guardian also told the authorities that she had noticed several days before the abduction that a car had stopped near the home while a man stood at the end of the driveway looking at the house.

The boy's father, Pu Shun Chen, who owns Landwin Corporation, a property development company with offices in Taiwan and Temple City, near Los Angeles, received a \$1.5 million (\$900,000) ransom demand while he was in Taiwan.

FBI agents tracked down the owner of the car and soon located the Temple City

house where the boy was being held. The authorities waited to confirm the boy's location before raiding the home.

Before delivering the ransom money, the father asked if he could speak to his son to make sure that he was still alive. During that conversation, agents tracked the mobile telephone to the Temple City home.

At the same time, under the direction of Chinese and US authorities, the father agreed to a meeting in Fuzhou, in China's Fujian province about 30 miles across the sea from Taiwan, to deliver \$300,000.

The Chinese authorities arrested two men who had accompanied the boy's father to a Fuzhou bank to withdraw the ransom at the same time as police officers raided the Temple City home.

Xu Lin Wang, 27, of Temple City, and Xue Han Wang, of New York, both originally from Fuzhou, were arrested and charged with hostage-taking. If they are convicted, they could be sentenced to life in prison. (APF)

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In search of the energy inside a vacuum

Physics can show there is energy in a vacuum, but will we be able to tap into it, asks Nigel Hawkes

A perfect vacuum is the absence of everything, unless you are a quantum physicist. Then you know that empty space is actually filled with particles which wink in and out of existence too rapidly to be seen. Even at absolute zero, a vacuum is sweating energy at every pore, unlikely as it seems. Some bolder spirits, touched by millennial fever, have even claimed that this "zero-point energy" is the fuel of the future which will generate electricity, replace crude oil and propel mankind across the vast emptiness of space.

At a laboratory near Austin in Texas, rather grandly called the Institute for Advanced Studies — an echo of the better-known institution at Princeton where Einstein spent his final years — a small team led by the physicist Dr Harold Puthoff is testing the claims of inventors who say that they can tap into zero-point energy. Over the past decade, Dr Puthoff has examined at least ten devices and found none that work.

To mainstream scientists, the effort smacks of cold fusion. But unlike that debacle, in this case at least the energy is real, as physicists have recently shown in experiments which confirm quantum theory's predictions to a nicety. While this brings us no closer to exploiting zero-point energy, or even to knowing how much of it there is, it is always satisfying when a long-standing prediction is proved true.

But first, why should zero-point energy even exist? The simplest explanation comes from Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, which declares that it is impossible to know simultaneously both the position and the momentum of a particle. At absolute zero, this principle would be violated if particles were

absolutely still, since then both position and momentum would be known. So they must continue to jiggle about, even when they no longer have any thermal motion. The same rule applies to energy. That means that even in empty space, energy continues to exist; and because energy and mass are equivalent, the vacuum energy must be able to create particles which flash briefly into existence, then disappear. Such ephemeral events are called fluctuations.

In 1948 the Dutch physicist Hendrik Casimir outlined a way of detecting this vacuum energy. He argued that it should manifest itself as a tiny force acting between two flat reflecting plates held very close together, but not touching, in a vacuum. If the gap were small enough, he reasoned, it would form a channel so narrow that only certain wavelengths of light, and their respective particles, could be contained within it.

In empty space, particles wink in and out of existence

Just as driving into a tunnel cuts off a radio signal, so the narrow channel would cut off some of the wavelengths of light. But outside the channel would be photons of all wavelengths. The discrepancy would result in a force pushing the plates together — a force no bigger than a speck of dust falling on the top plate but still, in theory, detectable.

Last year the physicist Steven Lamoreaux, of Los Alamos National Laboratory, measured the Casimir force for the first time. His experimental arrangement was more complex than Casimir envisaged, consisting of two gold-coated quartz bars and a gold-plated sphere, arranged close together so that the effect of the Casimir force was to cause one bar, hanging on a wire, to twist. He then measured the force needed to restore it to its



The Pleiades, an open star cluster 400 light years from Earth. Devotees of zero-point energy claim that it could help mankind to cross the vastness of interstellar space.

original position. It agreed with Casimir's prediction to within 5 per cent. "We're excited: it confirms a very basic prediction of quantum electrodynamics," said Ed Hinds of Sussex University.

Last month Umar Mohideen and Anustree Roy, of the University of California at Riverside, went a step further, using an atomic force microscope to position an aluminium-coated sphere less than a thousandth of a millimetre away from a plate and to measure the force between them. After correcting for errors, they concluded in *Physical Review Letters* that the force they measured was within 1 per cent of the predicted value. And by enlarging and cooling the ball, "we are confident that we can improve the accuracy by a factor of 1,000", Dr Mohideen said.

So yet again, quantum theory has triumphed over common sense; the world really is an oddly constructed place. But is zero-point energy just a curiosity, or does it underlie some of the large-scale structure of the Universe? Can it ever be put to use? Here is where enthusiasts such as Dr Puthoff and most of the rest of the physics community part company.

To many scientists, the effort smacks of cold fusion

would in turn generate gravitational fields out of all proportion to anything we observe in the Universe around us. Even if simplifications are made to eliminate the infinities, the number remains dauntingly large — according to the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Weinberg, ten to the power of 120 times larger than the observed expansion of the Universe allows. "This must be the worst failure of an order-of-magnitude estimate in the history of science," he says.

If so, there must be a lot less vacuum energy than the equations suggest. There might be enough, per-

haps, to contribute to an anti-gravity effect, observed in the accelerating expansion of the Universe described in last week's Science Briefing. Certainly Dr Lamoreaux's experiments do not indicate a huge untapped reservoir of energy waiting to be exploited. His experiment extracted 10-15 joules, a piffling quantity. He resents having become a hero to a group for whom he has little time. "The zero-point energy community is more successful at advertising and self-promotion than it is at carrying out bona fide scientific research," he told *Scientific American*.

None of this worries Dr Puthoff. He believes that zero-point energy provides the force that stops electrons in atoms spiralling down until they hit the nucleus, and also suspects that inertia, the reluctance of

objects to be accelerated, is caused by the drag of moving through a zero-point field. If so, he argues, then it would be worth trying to manipulate the field to reduce inertia, which would enable a rocket to go much faster, and hence much further, on the same fuel load. NASA, the American space agency, convened a meeting at which this idea was discussed, to the disgust of some physicists.

Although it is never wise to declare a possible source of energy moonshine — as Lord Rutherford once did of nuclear power — the prospect of civilisation subsisting on a vacuum seems improbable in the extreme.

Even in a quantum universe, with its Alice in Wonderland quality, that would be too close to getting something for nothing.

Microarrays can carry 10,000 fragments of DNA — and will eventually diagnose disease

Genetics' smartcard

A NEW device is set to revolutionise biology. No bigger than a credit card but carrying up to 10,000 fragments of DNA, the microarray will do for genetics what the silicon chip did for computing. It is a safe bet that in the next century, microarrays will be diagnosing disease, assessing an individual's risk of cancer or heart disease, or monitoring the progress of a drug treatment.

Last week a team from the Medical Research Council's Clinical Sciences Centre at

Hammersmith Hospital used a microarray to identify a gene in rats that causes a condition akin to insulin resistance syndrome in human beings. The discovery, published in *Nature Genetics* and reported in some editions of *The Times* on December 29, is important not only because the syndrome is an early pointer to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, but also because it illustrates the power of microarrays to penetrate the genetic jungle and pinpoint a single gene.

The method works because DNA is a double-stranded molecule which, when split into single strands, does its best to double up again. But it can only do so if it finds the right single strand with which to form a pair. The strands consist of chains of bases — ade-



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

nine, cytosine, guanine and thymine — which always form the same pairs. Adenine on one strand always binds to thymine, while cytosine binds to guanine. This means that two single strands of DNA

will fasten together like a zipper, but only if their sequences are complementary.

A microarray consists of a solid surface of glass or silica, with single-stranded fragments of DNA arranged in columns and rows across its surface. Creating the chips has something in common with building a silicon circuit. The end product is a flat surface with a huge number of short lengths of DNA floating from it, like tendrils of seaweed rising from the ocean floor.

To use the chip, a DNA sample is taken from a patient, purified, split into single strands, then cut into short lengths. Each piece is then tagged with a fluorescent molecule, and washed over the chip. Where DNA strands in the mixture hit a complementary sequence on the chip, they

bind. The better the match, the stronger the bond. Then a chemical is washed over the chip to break all but the strongest bonds. Finally a computer reads the position of the fluorescent tags still attached to the surface, and matches them to the original length of DNA attached to that site.

In this way a microarray can be used to "interrogate" a sample of DNA and to identify the DNA sequences within it. "In a single afternoon, people have confirmed work that took several years using conventional gene sequencing processes," Ed Hurwitz, of Affymetrix, a California company which has pioneered the technology, told *New Scientist*. *Nature Genetics* has produced a supplement on the subject, the Chipping Forecast, available on the Internet as a Web special at <http://genetics.nature.com>. One day, the entire human genome will be available on a chip, or range of chips. Then results will really pour in.

Sex, shakes and the single stickleback

AMONG male sticklebacks, size really doesn't matter. What the females want is not a big mate, but one who can shake that thing. The better the shaker, the more desirable he is, according to Sara Ostlund and Ingrid Ahnert, zoologists from Uppsala University in Sweden.

They studied the 15-spined stickleback, *Spinachia spinachia*, a species in which the male provides the main care for offspring: building nests, cleaning and protecting the eggs, and fanning them with his pectoral fins.

The point of fanning is to oxygenate the embryos, to improve their chances of survival. The optimum fanning style is achieved in short but vigorous bouts in which the highest possible beat rate is reached. So females can do themselves a favour by picking as mates those males who can do this well.

But how are they to know in advance? The zoologists report in *Animal Behaviour* that shaking is how the males advertise their skills. They do so by bending their heads upwards and shaking very fast for about a second, alternating the behaviour with other courting rituals such as showing the nest, approaching the female, or biting her.

Valuable prize for lunar prospectors

WHAT use is the Moon? While it is certainly not paved with gold, it does harbour a gas that may one day be as valuable as helium-3. This rare isotope of helium, 1,000 times less common than the regular helium-4, could provide the fuel for a future generation of fusion reactors, in which it would be combined with deuterium — a form of hydrogen — to produce abundant energy.

Helium-3 is far more plentiful on the Moon than on Earth because the Moon captures it from the solar wind, a flow of particles from the Sun. It is estimated that 750,000 tonnes of helium-3 lie in the top three metres of the Moon's surface, when a mere 30 tonnes in a fusion reactor would be enough to meet the annual energy demands of the entire American economy. Now planetary scientists from the US Geological Survey have produced a map of the distribution of helium-3 for future prospectors.

The best areas lie in the maria, the Moon's dark seas, but regions with titanium-rich rocks are also pinpointed because they trap the gas. But nobody is likely to be tramped in the rush to exploit it. At best, helium levels in the lunar soil do not exceed 20 parts per billion, which means shifting a lot of soil for not much helium.

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Do you have to have big breasts to work here?

Saturday morning. Hunched over *The New York Times*, Peter lets out a sudden groan. "Tragic news," he cries. "The Manhattan Hooters is going bankrupt. We must go there before it closes."

In fact he has been trying to organise a trip to Hooters since it opened here on 56th Street, just off Broadway, a year ago. I have not been enthusiastic. With 232 restaurants across the country, Hooters is the sixth-largest restaurant chain in America; however, the attraction is more than its food. Like most other chains, it serves the standard fare of burgers, chicken wings and chef salads suffocated with blue-cheese dressing. But Hooters offers an extra delicacy: a fleet of friendly waitresses, famous for their generous breasts, camouflaged by push-up bras into skimpy crop-tops accompanied by equally skimpy orange shorts.

"I'd better get a group together while we can still go," says Peter briskly, reaching for the phone. "Michael? Did you see that Hooters has filed for chapter 11 protection from creditors? We're thinking of..."

"Absolutely!" interrupts Michael. "Count me in." "Hooters? That's my Dad's favourite restaurant," says Dana, laughing. "Can I bring him, too?"

I call to make a reservation on the free-phone number. "Burger and fries, burger and fries, burger and fries..." says the message imitating a stock record. "Tired of the same old menu? Come to Hooters and enjoy our gourmet hotdogs. You can add mushrooms!" Then the receptionist answers.

"Hello, Hooters."

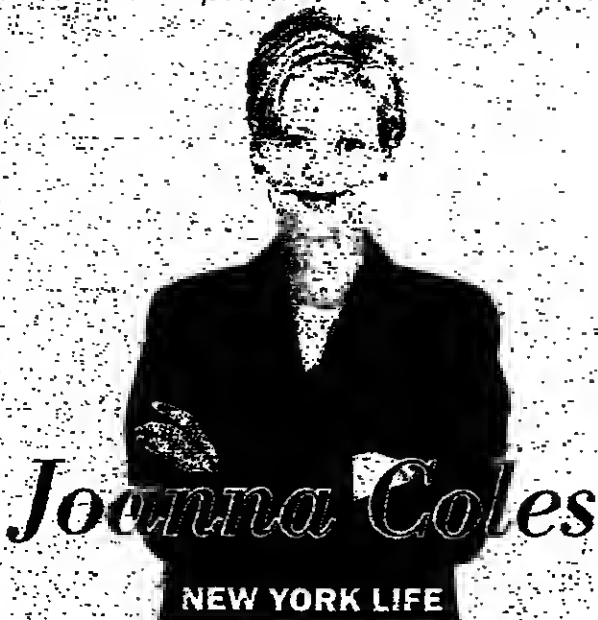
"Can I make a reservation for tonight?" I ask.

"You want to make a reservation?" This in itself is our first warning. In a town where you can wait weeks for a booking, and La Cuvette, five minutes walk away on Madison, claims to receive 5,000 calls a day from diners begging for a table, the girl from Hooters sounds incredulous.

"Yes, for six people."

"Er, OK then, but there's really no need."

Saturday night. From the outside, Hooters, perched on the second floor above a 24-hour parking garage, is not easy to



Joanna Coles
NEW YORK LIFE

spot. Its entrance is up some steps leading to a concrete courtyard, where the owner later dolefully admits he was recently mugged. The six of us arrive promptly at 6pm but are soon to be disappointed.

"Where are the hooters?" exclaims Peter, as a waitress sails past in a shapeless white tracksuit and Ross, the man-

ager, shows us to a high, round table whose centerpiece is a fixed roll of paper towel. Dana's father, a veteran of several Hooters bars in Virginia, looks confused. "The interior is kind of the same but one of the girls from my local Hooters, at Newport News, went on to be a Playboy centrefold," he says. "I

don't think anyone here's gonna do that."

Another fully tracksuited girl goes past and, noting our chagrin, Ross apologises. "We are having a little heating problem..." Outside it is a perishing 15F and one of the coldest days I can remember.

Though the interior is the regulation sauna-style orange pine, reminiscent of a ski chalet, it is distinctly cool.

"Hi, I'm Anna. Welcome to Hooters. I'm your waitress for this evening," says Anna, hopping up on to one of the high stools and settling in as if to join us for the evening. This is another of Hooters' unique selling points which goes down as well west of the Hudson. While they take orders, the waitresses are required to join your table and chat.

Though slight, Anna's cleavage is bravely on display, peeping from the top of her crop-top. As we look around, it becomes clear that she is the only one sporting enough to expose any part of her body at all. The other girls are sticking to their sweats, their only concession to Hooters being the red flashing badges they wear on each nipple. The wall above us is deco-

rated with imitation road signs. "Caution: blondes thinking!" Next to it is another one: "Warning: high levels of hydrogen peroxide in the air." And another, featuring twin humps, warns simply: "Bumps."

On the neighbouring table

a large man has just inserted long ribbed stems of celery up each nostril and is nodding his head, barking like a walrus to cheers from his companions. Anna hands us each a paper plate and an anti-septic wipe.

"Hooters — delightfully tacky yet unrefined," boasts the menu, recalling the original dilemma faced in 1983 by the start-up team of what to name yet another restaurant chain. "Simple, what else brings a gleam to men's eyes everywhere besides beer and chicken wings and an occasional winning football season? Hooters — it is supposed they were into owls!"

"Yeah, that owl thing confused people a bit," says

Dana's father. "At the grand opening in Newport News, grandmothers took children along thinking it was a nature restaurant."

We order two Sample Platters — "A little bit of everything. Trust us, we never lie."

Around us the restaurant erupts as 50 television screens show the Arizona Cardinals scoring against the Dallas Cowboys. In his excitement, the man on the neighbouring table has removed the celery stick from his right nostril and is chomping it.

At a time when New York's Mayor is closing down the city's sex clubs, Hooters' girls are more Baywatch than Sally Bowles. The atmosphere is saucy postcard not serious sex, and in one corner two young children are cheerfully tucking into a pile of battered buffalo wings, accompanied by their parents.

So why hasn't it caught on here, I ask Richard Yudenfriend, the owner of the franchise, sitting gloomily at the bar. Given that it now has two extremely successful S&M restaurants, is Manhattan too sophisticated? Its taste in sex too dark for this wholesome Midwestern version? "No, no. The problem is that the landlord's not giving me enough signage exposure," he grumbles, flicking his tiny ponytail. "No one can find us."

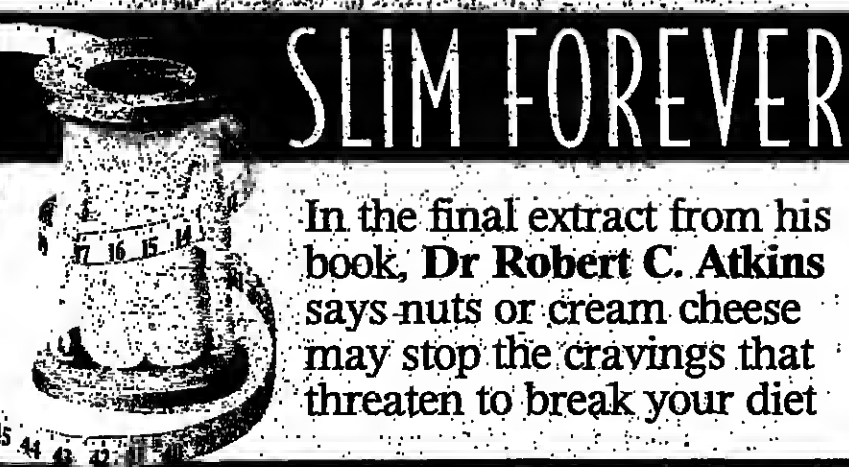
"Do you have to have big breasts to work here?" I inquire.

"No," he insists. "Just the right personality." Hanging from the ceiling above him, a promotional inflated Budweiser sofa is leaking air with a soft hiss.

"Whenever I go to a different city I always look for the Hooters," says Roberto Rosado, a broker, roosting at the bar in a black woolly cap and alpine sweater. "I came by for a beer once, wanted to be alone, but I loved the staff. I like the Miami Beach Hooters. It's just like this — only 60 degrees warmer."

As we get up to leave, Yudenfriend calls after us. "Come back at the end of next week — we should have auxiliary heating on by then."

How to silence the body when it cries out for a doughnut



In the final extract from his book, Dr Robert C. Atkins says nuts or cream cheese may stop the cravings that threaten to break your diet



Beware the binge: if your body screams out for a particular food, you have activated an addiction. It is metabolic — and you must tough it out

The Atkins programme is not just about losing weight. It helps you to keep excess pounds off for ever by adding some of your most desired foods to the basic diet you lost weight on. It also recognises the fact that sometimes it is just impossible to resist a craving or the desire to binge — and shows you how to break the diet and survive.

If you do succumb to that craving and go back to sugar, bread or fruit, you suddenly discover that you must have these foods and that no day or meal feels right without them. If this should happen, you will notice that the need which develops is genuinely physical. It isn't simply that a doughnut tastes good and that you'd like to have it. No, your body roars with anxiety and passion for that doughnut. And then you know — you have activated an addiction, just like an alcoholic with his bottle.

This isn't shameful. It's physical. It's chemical. It's met-

abolic — and that's precisely why you must avoid it. Most of you already know that for a significant portion of your life carbohydrates have been stronger than you. But even now you must never ignore a craving; it may pass but it is likely to reappear momentarily when your resolve is weak. And then you break the diet.

Since craving is part of addiction, that could trigger a cycle of addictive eating behaviour. Your craving appeared, most likely, in a relatively fasting state. It was triggered by a fall in blood glucose and your body perceived a need to put a brake on the falling glucose level and gave a signal that sweets were needed.

Change your physiology from a fasting to a fed state by eating something. In Atkins diet language, food, rich food, and plenty of it — but, of course, fat and protein food with very little or no carbohydrate. This will stabilise your blood glucose and all the other constituents that give rise to

the craving signal. The best foods to beat a craving are macadamia nuts, the diet's best friend. Other nut choices are walnuts, pecans or Brazil nuts, are cream cheese or rich dessert cheese.

You can also do this with something sweet — artificially so — and with whipping cream. Put three or four tablespoons of whipping cream into a glass and top it with a diet soft drink, or you may opt for diet gelatin dessert with whipping cream. Or try fried pork rinds which sound terribly fatty but, in fact, contain nearly none. Virtually all the fat has been rendered off.

Similarly, if you binge, it is better to binge on protein/fat foods. Not because you can't gain a pound or two if you put away too many thick steaks, but because protein foods are fundamentally self-limiting. Everyone has eaten 30 biscuits in one sitting at some time, but how many people have eaten ten hard-boiled eggs at one sitting? People just don't do it.

Protein and fat foods satiate appetite too quickly. The crucial fact about protein foods is that they don't unleash a metabolic tidal wave in your body. Very few people get protein addiction. Your blood glucose level doesn't rise sharply and fall when you eat an omelette.

On reaching your ideal weight, move on to the maintenance diet. Here you no longer need to practise a ketogenic diet, since ketosis/lipolysis by definition involves an element of fat loss. Newly slim people are no longer trying to shed pounds so they don't burn fat. But here is the catch that many dieters don't understand: there is very little leeway before you break through the other Critical Carbohydrate Level — the Critical Carbohydrate Level for Maintenance, the one at which you begin to gain.

A typical person of average metabolic resistance may find he must stay on between 40 and 60 grams of carbohydrate daily. Eating more than the 40

prevents him from losing more pounds and becoming too thin; eating less than the 60 prevents weight gain.

Once you are on the maintenance diet you can eat most vegetables, nuts and berries. You can cautiously reintroduce the vegetables containing more than 10 per cent carbohydrate, as well as whole grains such as oats, barley, millet or buckwheat. You may even be able to handle an occasional potato and a fruit a day. You can begin to use recipes containing some carbohydrates.

But the last choice for you, the truly hazardous indulgence, is sweets. Frankly, you should restrict your consumption of sweets made with real sugars to the occasional slice of birthday cake. Make your own sweets with artificial sweeteners. And remember to be endlessly wary of sugar and corn syrup, white flour and corn starch. Look at labels on packaged foods and avoid like the plague those that contain sugar, corn syrup, honey, maltose, dextrose, fructose, lactose, sorbitol and other variations. Use caffeine and alcohol in moderation.

And if you find yourself gaining weight, don't put off dealing with it — go straight back to the induction phase of the diet. Never allow yourself to be more than a two-week diet away from that goal weight. Do not go back to your maintenance diet without first losing all you have regained. It is simple. A salad a day of carbohydrate and you have slashed your weight back to perfect in as little as six to eight days, or two to three weeks if you have high metabolic resistance.

Extracted from Dr Atkins' New Diet Revolution, published by Vermilion at £6.99. Times readers can order it, free of postage/packaging, by calling The Times Bookshop, 0990 134439. Copyright Dr Robert C. Atkins 1999.

SUPPLEMENTS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

ALL my patients receive a fairly significant amount of vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids and other nutritional agents. I prescribe them because I have learnt that nutrients can have an impact on anyone's health.

I have found many nutrients to be valuable, conferring health advantages even on healthy people, so I no longer consider that a person following a theoretically optimal — even "perfect" — diet could live as long or as healthily as he could were he to take dietary nutritional supplements as well. I have developed a diet's formula of supplements. It includes: Vitamin A 200 IU; Beta-Carotene 500 IU; Vitamin D2 15 IU; Thiamine (B1) 5mg; Riboflavin (B2) 4mg; Vitamin C (Calcium Ascorbate) 120mg; Niacin (B3) 2mg; Nicotinamide 5mg; Panthothenic (B5) 25mg; Calcium Pantothenate (B6) 25mg; Pyridoxal-5-Phosphate 20mg; Pyridoxine (B6) 20mg; Folic Acid 100mcg; Biotin 75mcg; Cyanocobalamin (B12) 30mcg; Vitamin E 20 IU; Copper (Sulfate) 200mcg; Magnesium (Oxide) 500mg; Choline (Bitartrate) 100mg; Inositol 50mg; PABA 100mg; Manganese (Chelate) 4mg; Zinc (Chelate) 10mg; Citrus Bioflavonoids 50mg; Vanadyl Sulfate 15mg; Selenium 40mcg; Octacosanol 150mg; N-Acetyl-L-cysteine 200mg; and L-Glutathione (reduced) 5mg — all in a base of Lactobacillus bulgaricus and bifidus acidophilus, a complex and growth factors.

The suggested dosage is one to three tablets three times a day, after meals.

Catherine Collins, chief dietitian at St George's Hospital, London, points out that this diet is not suitable for diabetics. Anyone starting a diet should first consult their doctor.

MEAL PLANNER IDEAS FOR THE MAINTENANCE DIET

BREAKFAST
(All foods on the Induction and the Ongoing Weight Loss diets are also included.)
1 grapefruit 135g (4½ oz) of honeydew or cantaloupe melon; 90g (3oz) of berries, any kind, with a dollop of soured cream or whipped cream (not pre-sweetened); you may add almond, lemon, orange or vanilla flavours; 125g (4oz) unfavoured yogurt; corned beef hash; eggs; Florentine mushrooms, onions and eggs.

LUNCH
Spinach egg pie — 900g (2lb) spinach leaves, 1½ cup fresh basil, 2½ cup ricotta cheese, 2 egg yolks, 430ml (1½ pt) whipping cream, 1½ cup grated Parmesan cheese. Preheat oven to 230C/450F/Gas Mark 8. Cook spinach for 3 minutes. Cool. Squeeze out excess water. Place in food processor with basil, ricotta, egg yolks and cream. Add salt, pepper and grated onion to taste. Purée. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake until golden. (Makes four servings, each with 13.6 carb. grams.)

DINNER
Starters, soups and salads: chilled martined stuffed fried mushrooms; cold salad of scrambled egg and cottage cheese with asparagus; stuffed fried mushrooms with goat's cheese.
Main courses: chicken cacciatore; medallions of lamb with green lentils and bacon.
Side dishes: French beans with walnut sauce; stuffed peppers.
Desserts: Chocolate truffles; rum truffles; zabaglione.

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Too sugary, even for the States

Bronwen Maddox asks if America is ready for Mrs President

The most boring politician in America could have upstaged the impending Senate trial of Bill Clinton. That drama is lacking in direction, momentum or menace. As it happens, a couple of the dullest had a good shot. The arch-conservative Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, in announcing that he might run for the Republican nomination for President in 2000, and Senator John Ashcroft, figurehead of the Religious Right, in hinting that he probably would not, glimmered in the limelight. Neither signal has real import, other than to show how much attention has already turned to the next presidency, regardless of President Clinton's fate.

But it was Elizabeth Dole who deservedly grabbed this week's headlines. Her announcement that she was stepping down as President of the Red Cross to consider "exciting possibilities" was read, as intended, as a sign that she might run for the presidential nomination. Can Bob Dole's wife, who threw herself so prominently into his unsuccessful 1986 bid for the White House, succeed where her husband failed? Will America have its first female President?

The real problem is, she is untied and second-rate

For all the delighted speculation, the answer is almost certainly no. The barrier is not the national reluctance to elect a woman as its head. For sure, that exists, but it is shrinking, and no longer seems insurmountable. The greater problem, in Mrs Dole's case, is that she is second-rate. If Elizabeth Hanford Dole, 62, ran for the Republican presidential nomination, she would be only the second woman to do so. The first, Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, in 1964, won only 225,000 primary votes.

But it is not just novelty which has generated the buzz around Mrs Dole this week. Repeated polls of Republican voters put her second only to George W. Bush, son of the former President, as the most popular candidate. A Harvard-educated lawyer from North Carolina, she can claim to know Washington from the inside: she worked in non-elected positions in six Administrations, including Deputy Assistant for Consumer Affairs for President Nixon, Secretary of Transportation under President Reagan and Secretary of Labour under President Bush. She won rave reviews for her speech at the 1996 Republican National Convention, and won more airtime in championing her husband in his 1996 campaign. She is thought easily capable of raising the \$25 million or so needed for the primary election campaign. A born-again Christian, she has a stronger appeal to the Religious Right than George W. Bush.

She can offer her party its long-sought solution to the "gender gap" — women's relative antipathy to Republicanism. Not least, and with more subtle appeal than the Clintons' 1992 slogan of "two for

the price of one", she offers the reassuring backdrop of her widely liked husband.

But Mrs Dole's shortcomings are also glaring. She has never before sought elective office, nor been forced to spell out her policies in detail. Nor are those policies clear, beyond her opposition to abortion. Originally a Democrat, she became an Independent during the Nixon Administration and converted to Republicanism on marrying Bob Dole. A campaign would also reopen scrutiny of her past financial dealings, particularly gains she is said to have made in the 1980s from having her personal finances handled by an adviser who had close knowledge of legislation her husband was helping to craft.

But above all, you could not call her a natural politician. Known for conscientious over-preparation, there is something of the Harriet Harman about her. As *Time* magazine put it: "Elizabeth never gets a word or phrase or chuckle out of place, but she can no more ad lib than levitate." Even when cast in the role of top executive, she plays it as head

girl: she once greeted employees in the parking lot with a Stop sign so that she could check their seatbelts. The message she sends is confusing: ten parts Southern girlishness, with a doll-like fringe, to one part steely executive. She has fashioned a saccharine style, helped by her honeyed accent, which has prompted one conservative commentator to note: "A warning should be passed out to diabetics — after ten minutes, they'll suffer from sugar shock."

So while she is often compared with Hillary Clinton, the First Lady is in a different league. True, there are similarities: both are Methodists, were raised in comfortable middle-class surroundings, and trained as lawyers. But there is a chasm between the diffidence and easiness of the 1950s-style Southern belle, and the purposefulness of Hillary's Chicago-honed, 1960s passions.

Mrs Dole's stiltedness should not, however, lead observers to exaggerate the barriers to a woman becoming President. The conservatism of many Americans about women's role, despite the vigour of the feminist movement, remains one of the country's paradoxes. But as the polls have shown this week, voters' feelings are changing. Many seem now to feel they could live with a female President, particularly a Republican, who would not seem as offensively radical as a Democrat.

It would be a shame if Mrs Dole's near-certain failure to win the party's nomination led observers — or future candidates — to overestimate the barriers to women. She could, perhaps more plausibly, aim to become America's first female Vice-President. As running-mate to George W. Bush, she would bring balance to the Texan's ticket.

comment@the-times.co.uk



"TAKE THIS... IT'LL DO YOU A POWER OF GOOD..."

Herrrs to the revolution

Perry Anderson on the former student radicals who will rule in Berlin

This will be Berlin's year. A new German Government is moving to an old German capital. But what sort of Government, and what sort of city?

Conventional wisdom compares Gerhard Schröder with Tony Blair. One genuine point in common is that both were picked as candidates by the media before they were chosen by their party. The comparison to Blair, in Schröder's case, was part of the anointing process itself. They share telegraphic looks and a rhetoric of modernisation. But in some ways the parallels are misleading. With his private schooling, his stint at Oxford and his lucrative practice at the Bar, Blair is a typical product of a privileged background.

Schröder, whose father was killed on the Russian Front, comes from the debris of postwar German society. His mother was a charwoman; his first job was in an ironmonger's shop; his degree was eventually obtained at night school. He became a leader of the Jusos, the SPD's youth organisation in the early Seventies, when it was well to the left of the party, and took active part in mass demonstrations. The aura of moderate pragmatism is quite recent. But there is no lack of charm: sturdy good looks, attractive thick voice, mischievous smile. Blair appears an over-eager adolescent by comparison.

The larger difference, however, is institutional. The SPD is not in thrall to its leader. It is a very different party from New Labour. Twice the size, with 700,000 members, it has a culture noticeably more working class. The atmosphere of an SPD rally is closer to Labour meetings of the Sixties or Seventies than to anything in Britain today. Trade unions in Germany weathered the Eighties better, and enjoy stronger relations with the party. A still more important difference between the two organisations lies in the regional distribution of power in the SPD.

Germany's federal structure means that political careers are made first and foremost in the *Länder*. Schröder, catapulted within six months of winning a provincial election in Hanover to leadership of the country, is entitled to his party's gratitude. But he has no deep-rooted following within it. Indeed, he was widely distrusted, the party's attitude recalling the view expressed by Claud Cockburn that "charm and dependability so rarely go together".

The members' favourite remains Oscar Lafontaine, whose skill, charisma and discipline galvanised the SPD machine in the years of Helmut Kohl's decline. Lafontaine was another postwar orphan from a poor family, educated by Jesuits in the Saar, who became the brightest of his generation of SPD politicians.

He is intellectually better prepared than Schröder, with more decided views. As Minister of Finance and SPD chairman, his position is unusually strong. Lafontaine is the first Western politician of aggressively Keynesian outlook in 25 years. He has already seen off Schröder's attempt to install a wan version of Richard Branson as Economics Minister and shaken the Bundesbank.

The direction of the Government, of course, will not be set by the SPD alone. The rules of any German coalition give significant leverage to the lesser partner. The Greens are likely to pull the Government in less conventional directions than social democracy, left to its own devices, would follow.

The figure of Joschka Fischer, the Green Foreign Minister, indicates why this should be so. Son of another victim of the war, a labourer expelled from Bohemia in 1946, he is a survivor of the student radicalism of the Sixties. In those years, he led one of the most daring "spontaneous" groups in Frankfurt. With others, he took a job on the assembly line in an Opel factory to rouse the working class to revolt. When management flushed them out, Fischer turned to the squatters' movement in Frankfurt, organising a mobile strike force, the *Putztruppe*, to block police action against housing occupations, matching violence with violence where need be.

Eventually a demonstration against the death of Ulrike Meinhof in 1976 got out of hand and a policeman was nearly killed. Fischer was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, but released for lack of evidence. Changing his mind about

The map of Berlin is defined in varying shades of red

within the generally conservative culture of the Federal Republic. There was no body of social and philosophical work remotely rivaling its influence.

Finally, there was a strain in the national culture at large that relayed the momentum of the late Sixties and early Seventies into the Green movement a decade later. This was, of course, the long tradition of German Romanticism, interpreted broadly, from Werther to Werders, the most enduring strand in the sensibility of the country's intelligentsia.

In a great variety of different registers, two motifs remained constant: an acute sense of the mystery of the natural world, and of the high calling of youth. The Greens are the populist heirs to this tradition. The revolutionary ferment of '68, however

Utopian, was on such a scale that when it ebbed, it left behind a rich ferment of counter-cultural enclaves in West Germany. Here the environmental concerns of the Eighties found a natural habitat. Germany is the one country where the question of what has ultimately become of the experience of '68 will be put to a direct test. The reinstating of Berlin as the capital next year will, if anything, only underline this progressive turn to the left.

No European city has accreted so many misleading legends as Berlin. To resist them is easier, however, than to capture the elusive realities now taking shape behind them. Most people associate Berlin with Prussian military tradition, Bismarck's autocracy, Nazi violence and megalomania. In fact, Frederick II preferred his complex in Potsdam. Bismarck disliked Berlin so much that, after unification, he wanted to make Kassel the capital of the country. No prominent Nazi came from Berlin.

Berlin was not a natural setting for reaction. In 1848 it saw the hardest fighting at the barricades of any city in Germany. By the turn of the century, it was the most industrialised capital in Europe, with a working-class population to match. It led the November Revolution and was the scene of the Spartacist Rising. In the Weimar period, it was a left-wing stronghold.

The Third Reich and the Cold War cut off these traditions. After Hitler's fall, the division of Berlin masked the question of what, if any, underlying continuities might have survived. The 1998 elections offer a startling answer. The Left won every single district. The map of the city is just one colour, in two shades: bright Social Democratic red in the west and southeast, deep post-Communist red in the centre and northeast.

Compare Paris, a permanent fief of the Right: Rome, where Fini's ex-Fascists are the largest party; or even London, where Ken Livingstone will never sweep Westminster or Kensington. Bismarck's nightmare has come true. Berlin is going to be the most left-wing capital in Europe.

This is an edited version of an article in the current edition of the *London Review of Books*.

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These we have missed

Let's celebrate our living legends, says Giles Coren

The loss of not one but two singing cowboys in 1998 was dismissed by most of us as one of death's little ironies. The Grim Reaper seemed to be struggling — very much against the grain of his specific remit — to bring off something rather witty with a couple of finely chosen sweeps of his scythe. Something, at any rate, worthy of a Wildean aphorism.

Once the laughter had died down, however, and it came time, on new year's morning, to leaf through the colour mags' annual double-page offerings of the past 12 months' most significant croaks, it was not so much the fact that Gene Autry and Roy Rogers were no longer with us that seemed difficult to grasp, as the fact that, until so very recently, they had actually been walking about exchanging pleasantries with the neighbours, burning their tongues on too-hot coffee and banging their toes on doors and bed legs.

I was hurried back instantaneously to the Christmas of 1994, when, grazing through that year's grim selection of inch-square celebrity grins (they wouldn't have been smiling if they'd known), I was moved to call out to my girlfriend in the bathroom: "Did you know that Eugene Ionesco had died?"

A disbelieving head popped round the door, and she gurgled through lips that frothed, with toothpaste assumed, rather than with indignation at the loss inflicted upon France's tradition of Absurdist theatre: "Ionesco was alive?"

I felt similarly this year about Maureen O'Sullivan, Martha Gellhorn, and Ferdinand Porsche, and last year, almost cripplingly, about Laurie Lee. What a waste that they should have been alive, and we didn't know. Still, sweating a little at the near-vitality of those two stonemason cronies, I flew to my books, computer and telephone. If they had been alive, then so, too, might others have been. Was it possible, for example, that the greatest cowboy of them all rode on? There, at www.loneranger.com, was confirmation: "Clayton Moore will be 85 in September." I ran round the house singing Rossini's most famous overture until it hurt (Rossini is dead, by the way).

1999 had begun as well as I could have dreamt. This is what the supplements should be giving us — not lists of those who are dead, but those who struggle on. Let us not weep at the passing of Alice Faye, but celebrate the continued good health of 91-year-old Fay Wray. We have lost Frank Muir, but there is still time to write fan letters to Denis Norden. Stanley Matthews and Tom Finney are still here. Don't wait for grainy photos of their knobby knees and hobnailed football boots to tell you they have gone. Shirley Temple is alive, and Don Bradman, and Buzz Aldrin and Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, and Evel Knievel. Desert Orchid, now 19, had a trot out on Boxing Day before the King George VI at Kempton Park, and looked in fine fettle. There are still 13 of the original Munchkins on the planet, you know.

Don't walk around glum that every year wipes out another handful of Carry On stars — we still have Barbara Windsor, Jim Dale and Joan Sims. Apart from Steve McQueen and Yul Brynner, we still have most of the Magnificent Seven. Well, I can't seem to track down Brad Dexter, as such. But that is probably a good sign.

And there is philosophy in all of this. It may be a forlorn hope for Christian consolations, but ask yourself: is Frank Sinatra really any less alive than Bob Hope? We have come full circle in this age of celebrity, and arrived back at a point where we should be able to accept that death really is only a shuffling off of the mortal coil, for oft of earth cannot dent record sales, or prevent the television repeats of MGM musicals.

The dead will always have their moment. It is the living who need our attention. I look forward to a time when Peter Sissons will introduce the last item on the news by lowering his voice a little, looking very seriously at the camera, and saying: "Finally, Mike Yarwood, the comedian whose impression of Harold Wilson made him a household name in the 1970s, and who for many represents the last of a forgotten breed in British television, was still alive yesterday at his home in Surrey. He is not even ill. He was not on stage at the time. The world of light entertainment is not in mourning. Mr Yarwood is 57."

Alan Coren is away.

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Oh my lord

AMONG the more startling disclosures expected in the forthcoming biography of Peter Mandelson, *Mandy*, is that the former minister calls his mother "Duchess". He shares this peculiar practice, I gather, with his fellow bachelor, the disc spinner Sir Jimmy Savile (pictured right), as well as those princes of darkness, the Krays. Social commentators and psychologists are pondering why he cannot make do with "Mandy". The former Labour MP and psycho-babbler Leo Abse believes it tells us rather a lot about Wendy's ambition.

"Duchesses have sons who are earls and counts," he says. "No doubt it reinforces his delusions of grandeur. Another indication is that he idolises his mother and is bound to her to such an excessive extent that he can't be bound to other women." Lord Hattersley, like Savile, from South Yorkshire, says it is an unusual name even for *furber* fanciers. "I've never heard anyone use it where I come from. I called my mother that, she would think I had gone crackers. It is more Cockney than Yorkshire, and used by people who have an unnatural interest in duchesses."

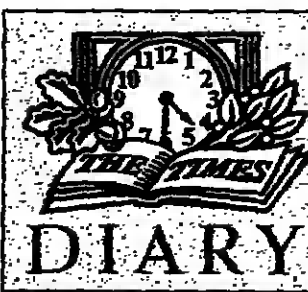
Anthony Clare, the radio quack, suggests it reflects the aspirations of Wendy as much as Mandy — "a powerful figure in his life, although his house could easily be the home of a duchess".

Jean Attfield, a Professor of Language at Oxford, suspects



inspiration from *Alice in Wonderland*: "The duchess says 'I beat my little boy when he sneezes'." And Jonathan Green, slang aficionado, says: "It is proletarian, possibly East End Jewish. It first arose in the 17th century to describe a good-looking, vulgar woman."

● **AFTER** my little scoop on birds nesting at the Dome, I am reminded that the Great Exhibition, the Dome's illustrious forbear, suffered similarly. The Duke of Wellington suggested to Queen



Victoria: "Try sparrowhawks. Ma'am! Perhaps Lord Falconer of Thoroton should do likewise."

Toff nosing

SEND for the toffs: the latest cry of William Hague after he axed Viscount Cranborne. After his flirtation with the Church, the Tory leader has trained his field-glasses on the green welly tendency. "I could not help noticing that when the Green movement was at its most vociferous at the end of the 1980s," he will say in a forthcoming paper, "we had Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, which were run by an Old Etonian hereditary peer and an Old Etonian baronet respectively. That was in stark contrast to the Conservative Party."

It will take a lot more than these

pronouncements, I fear, to make Rotherham Man smart.

● **BILLY ZANE**, the panty baddie husband to Kate Winslet in *Titanic*, clearly thinks he has the director's eye. On a visit to the Chelsea Cinema, he stormed out, yelling that the screen was blurred. Staff found that the film was out of focus — a detail the one-eyed projectionist had failed to spot.

Opening time

SIR WALTER SCOTT's haunt has been chilled by a blast of feminism.



"My grandfather says he once saw an absentee landlord"

Edinburgh's Speculative Society, the university debating and dining club which has succoured males since 1764, including the Duke of Edinburgh, is being challenged to open its gates to women. There is even talk of legal action.

"It is an old boys' club and an anachronism," says Sandra Eden, a law lecturer. She demands that the club, which Robert Louis Stevenson called "the best thing in Edinburgh", allows her into its rooms to join the candlelight discussions. The university promises to "investigate".

● **OXFORD** is considering hiring security guards to keep out students refusing to pay tuition fees. The 12 rebels have been told that unless they pay £1,000 by next week, they will be banned from every quad and spire. But it admits that without guards it will be impossible to keep the students from lectures. Such a move would offend liberal dons, but otherwise other students might consider the university toothless and join the rebels. A conundrum, indeed.

Narky Parky

THE man who put the chit into chat, Michael Parkinson, is scathing about the new breed of decorative television hosts. Meilin



da Messenger, the blonde beaver who has traded modelling for a career of sorts on Channel 5, comes in for particular criticism. "Simply, he believes she is not up to the job. 'You've got to train,' he says sternly. 'Take the producers who gave a talk show to her. Supposing I went along to them and said: 'By the way, you are the executive producer — I'm giving your job to Kylie Minogue [above]. What would they say?' Is Parky feeling insecure?"

JASPER GERARD



CREATURES OF EUROLAND

Serpents lurk in the lush euro-pastures extolled by politicians

In Europe's financial centres this week, the euro has made a suave entry. That by no means assures future success. On the streets, euro-11 citizens are being exhorted by jubilant politicians and glossy brochures to revel in a "new era for Europe". So far, so painless; and so abstract. Since consumers will go on using their national coinage until 2002, the momentous irreversibility of what has just occurred has yet to sink in. So has the realisation that the advent of what is still a virtual currency cannot guarantee more jobs, a surge in growth or greater unity of political purpose among euro-land's 11 members.

On the contrary, as is clear from our recent series on euro-land's fault-lines, the euro's chief potential advantage, the transparency it will bring to commerce and to relative economic performance, will throw into sharp relief a host of tensions — between the EU's North and South, town and country, old and young, dynamic zones and the Belgian or French rustbelts, between Dutch high technology and no-hope lands in east Germany and Italy's south, between the sluggish core and the overheating Irish or Spanish "periphery".

This is far from being an optimal currency zone with compatible characteristics and needs. Despite strenuous efforts to close the gaps on public debt, deficits and inflation — efforts that will be politically hard to sustain now that victory has so resoundingly and prematurely been declared — huge disparities remain between and within countries. Farming, industry and services have very different weights in national GDPs. Unemployment is nil in Luxembourg and 19 per cent in Spain, where wages are half those in Germany.

Yet a single exchange rate and monetary policy must now fit all: and when only Finland and Luxembourg have public debt ratios below Maastricht's 60 per cent threshold and Belgium's and Italy's are more than double, there is little fiscal leeway. So flexible labour markets will have to compensate for lost autonomy. Yet few governments are prepared to take the political heat of rapid deregulation. The euro could, as its fans claim, make the EU more competitive; but that would risk social unrest which, in France and east Germany, could turn violent. If pan-European producers migrated to low-cost areas,

for example, this could in theory drag down labour costs at the core. In practice, France and Germany would demand tax, social security and wage harmonisation to combat "social dumping". For the Mezzogiorno, that would be the kiss of death.

Euro-land's public are ill-prepared, because ill-informed, for trouble ahead. Leaders bent on an elitist project, which has throughout ruthlessly disdained the need for democratic assent, have attacked sceptics as unpatriotic, while presenting the euro as a panacea for every European ill. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, even asserts that the euro will make the EU the world's fastest growing region this year — a rash boast when Italy has downgraded its estimates to 1.8 per cent, and German growth could slow to a miserable 1.4 per cent. As for France's boast that the euro will mark "a new age in job creation", IMF simulations indicate that even if eurozone governments free up labour markets far more aggressively than most intend, by 2010 the euro will have cut sole queues by just 2 per cent. Without such flexibility, it expects unemployment to rise by then by 2 per cent.

The consequences could be explosive. That is why politicians, desperate for faster growth, are already on collision course against the European Central Bank which, by their own design, is statutorily immune to political pressure and barred by treaty from diluting its anti-inflationary mandate. Inflation already threatens the periphery; but the core countries need low interest rates and tight fiscal policy. They may well get the opposite. If Red-Green Germany, no longer an anchor of fiscal conservatism, overspends, the ECB could raise interest rates excessively as a show of strength.

Never in history has a multinational currency union succeeded. The EU has embarked on this unprecedentedly risky experiment with only a shallow, largely passive, consensus. Elites may feel more "European"; but as 2002 nears and people confront the trauma of pulsing currencies that form part of their sense of history and community, they may turn more, not less nationalist. In the lush euro-uplands of political rhetoric, lurk serpents of popular resentment ready to bite their masters' heels. It will take many years to find out whether these beasts can be truly tamed.

A SCOTTISH LANDSLIDE

Dewar plays on the pipes of auld resentment

In Scotland a mix of politics and populist sentiment ferment into a headstrong brew. Almost two centuries have passed since the Highland Clearances, when rapacious Scottish landowners forcibly evicted thousands of crofters so as to turn their estates over to more profitable sheep farming. But, in the national imagination, resentment of this historical cruelty still festers. Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, was intent on soothing old grudges when he allowed land reform to rise to the top of his legislative agenda and, just over a year ago, set up the Land Reform Policy Group. But Mr Dewar was responding to more than merely nostalgic pressures yesterday when he unveiled a plan claimed by Labour to be the most important shake-up to land ownership since the Middle Ages. In Scotland, polls show the Labour Party increasingly threatened by nationalist sentiment. Mr Dewar hopes his radical proposals will compete with the Scottish National Party and thwart its further rise.

Certain aspects of the Scottish system of land tenure need overhauling. Medieval feudalism, long ended in England, endures in Scotland. Estate owners are feudal superiors, with rights and proscriptions over their vassals. This antiquated form of tenure is open to abuse. But the Land Reform Policy Group delegates specific responsibility for feudal reform to the Scottish Law Commission. Instead, its inquiries have addressed the emotive issue of largescale land ownership.

The possession of sweeping Scottish

estates by aristocrats, the English and foreigners arouses animosity. Those who live and work on the land can find their farms sold from under their feet without consultation or warning. Under the stewardship of a few notorious absentee landlords, local communities wither and disperse. But several, more responsible landowners keep the economies of otherwise unviable tracts of land alive. Shooting and fishing provide seasonal employment, vast integral estates provide a haven for wildlife, bringing valuable tourist income to their isolated communities.

Mr Dewar may hope to seduce the Scottish electorate. But his proposals to enable compulsory government purchase of mismanaged estates are rashly inflammatory. Irresponsible landlords could be deterred by a few carefully aimed reforms, such as the establishment of an accessible register of land owners or legally enforceable minimum upkeep requirements. Several of Mr Dewar's ideas will prove, when debated in the Scottish Parliament, to be sensible components of gradual reform. They will lead to increased diversity of land use, and offer Scottish people greater involvement in running their communities. But in playing to the nationalist grandstand, Mr Dewar not only risks pointlessly exacerbating divisions between land owners and tenants, but shows that the winning of party political advantage in this emotive issue has become as covetous and expedient as the Clearances ever were.

RELATIVE TRUST

Disturbing allegations of 'backdoor' euthanasia

Doctors today need to be as expert in ethics as anatomy. Fine judgments about the balance between relieving pain and preserving life are among the most difficult they have to face. Confronted with an elderly man who writhes in agony, a doctor might well feel it necessary to sedate him. Some doctors, however, are accused today of seeing sedation as more than just a temporary relief from pain.

Patients' children have noted that their parents have suffered from dehydration after sedation, and then died from an infection. The cry has been raised that doctors are allowing "backdoor euthanasia". Physicians argue they have simply been trying to ease suffering. As we report, there is a disturbing trend of such cases in Britain's hospitals. A thorough investigation of these deaths and clear guidance for doctors on the use of sedatives is essential if the medical profession is to avoid accusations of allowing doctors to play God with their patients.

While doctors treating patients in a persistent vegetative state must refer their case to the courts before switching off any life support system or denying them food and water, doctors whose patients have

common illnesses are left to "exercise their clinical judgment". Some, it seems, sedate their patients and deprive them of food and water — allegedly without the patient's authorisation or that of his or her family. If a patient dies, the death certificate will commonly state that the cause of death was the underlying medical condition, not dehydration. This lack of regulation and transparency must be addressed.

The British Medical Association is currently consulting its members on the guidelines surrounding this practice. It should recommend greater clarity in the way doctors make decisions about a patient's treatment, and how they communicate that decision to the patient or his family. If doctors are expected to refer a case of patient in a permanent vegetative state to the courts, why should they not be expected to do the same for other patients?

Yet this debate must not obscure the more crucial question: Why were doctors sedating their patients? There appear to be a multitude of reasons, depending on the specific circumstances. Whatever the case, the BMA should decide whether it is ethically right to help nature to take its course.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Educating children about 'soft' and 'hard' drugs

From the Chief Executive of the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse

Sir, You report (January 2) that Keith Hellawell, the UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator is questioning the effectiveness of education about drug use.

In the Government's White Paper, *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain*, published last April, ten Secretaries of State said: "Action will be concentrated in areas of greatest need and risk. All drugs are harmful... And we will focus on those that cause the greatest damage including heroin and cocaine."

It is simply not true to say that drug education has "not worked". It is becoming clearer from research that drug education, delivered in the proper context and in the appropriate way, has the potential to reduce drug misuse or at least to delay the onset of experimentation. This in turn is more likely to reduce the prospect of a young person's drug use turning into a more harmful and risky dependent use.

Following the White Paper, the Department for Education and Employment published guidance to schools and the youth service on good practice and drug education. *Protecting Young People*. In his foreword to the guidance, Keith Hellawell said:

"Many schools have already established their drug education policies. Many examples of good practice have emerged. We need now to share this information and encourage all schools to take note of best practice..."

As Mr Hellawell will be aware, the national curriculum is under review and advisers and ministers are already considering the future role of personal, social and health education, including drug education. This will undoubtedly reinforce the need for a comprehensive programme to be delivered to all young people from age five onwards.

Keith Hellawell and the Govern-

ment need to recognise that throughout the world there is no drugs education programme that can absolutely guarantee to stop young people from ever taking drugs. If that is the sole objective, then the policy will fail. The aim has to be to reduce the damage that misuse of drugs can cause our young people.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER HOWARD,
Chief Executive,
Standing Conference on Drug Abuse,
32-36 Leman Street, SE1 0EE,
January 4.

From Dr Richard Cookson

Sir, Keith Hellawell wants school teachers to stop talking to British children about "soft" drugs. But will this change in policy actually succeed in preventing children from taking Ecstasy and cannabis? The truth is that nobody knows — and we may be missing an excellent opportunity to find out.

A rigorously designed scientific trial of this new drugs education campaign should be carried out in a carefully selected region of Britain. Over time, scientists could compare drug-taking behaviour in this region with drug-taking behaviour in other regions. This would provide high-quality scientific evidence about what form of drugs education campaign works best, which would be of genuine and lasting value in dealing with the British drugs problem.

A blanket change in drugs education policy across the whole of Britain will not provide useful scientific evidence, because scientists will not be able to disentangle the effects (if any) of Hellawell's policy from those of all the other possible influences on drug-taking behaviour. And all the old drugs arguments will continue, based not on scientific evidence but on the usual heady mixture of gut instinct, ideology and the understandable

political pressures on the "drug czar" to be seen to be doing something.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD COOKSON,
LSE Health,
London School of Economics,
Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE.
r.cookson@lse.ac.uk
January 2.

From Father Jim Duffy

Sir, My confidence in drug czar Keith Hellawell took a knock when I read that he was proposing that "reformed drug users could be used in more schools to give talks to pupils". Does he not realise that impressionable and immature, over-confident, young people, particularly those at greatest risk, will take one look at a reformed user or addict lecturing them about the dangers of drug use and say to themselves, "If he or she can kick the habit, so could I."

Keep reformed users out of the schools. Users or addicts who have failed to kick the habit and who are still not in control of their lives would be far more effective.

Yours sincerely,
JIM DUFFY,
5 Park Road, Rickmansworth,
Hertfordshire WD3 1HU.

From Mr A. J. Turner

Sir, You report that "there will be no jobs... in the Army or the police force" for those with a record of drug-related offences.

As the professionals who most influence youngsters are teachers and youth workers, perhaps that prohibition should be extended to them.

Your obedient servant,
ANDREW TURNER
(Vice-Chairman, Conservative National Education Society),
2 Northwood Place,
Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7TN,
January 2.

Peace in Cyprus

From Mr George Christodoulou

Sir, As a Cypriot whose ethnic background is Greek, I would like to respond to Mr Osman Streeter (letter, January 4).

I have never made the distinction between Greek and Turkish Cypriots because I believe that this distinction has greatly assisted in creating the present situation. Recalling times before the invasion by Turkey my own experiences are that both communities coexisted on the island peacefully. However, I believe the attitude towards Turks from the mainland was and is altogether different.

Now that there has been a great import of mainland Turks to northern Cyprus it would be very difficult for the island to be integrated. Therefore separation may be the only peaceful solution. However, Osman Streeter compares a mutually agreed exchange of population in 1923 with an invasion in 1974 which resulted in loss of life, mainly on the Greek side.

At that time Turkish Cypriots made up approximately 18 per cent of the population. Now mainland Turkey holds over 40 per cent of the island. Surely a statesmanlike response from Turkey would be to return some land as a positive move towards lasting peace.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE CHRISTODOULOU,
57 The Broadway, NW7 3DA,
January 4.

Mandelson resignation

From Mr William Hamilton

Sir, Lord Rees-Mogg compares Peter Mandelson's case with examples from history ("The noble tradition of British risk-takers", January 4).

The point, surely, is that standards are stricter now, and that Mandelson's conduct as a minister was in breach of guidelines which his Government had endorsed, and which his party had assured the electorate it would observe if elected.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM HAMILTON,
Pine Cottage, Fernhurst,
Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3EE,
January 4.

Redstarts stop Dome?

From Dr David Carvel

Sir, How delightful it was to read of the humble and endangered black redstart threatening to halt work on the Millennium Dome (report, January 5). I am unsure if Lord Falconer of Thoroton would be the best person to deal with this sensitively.

Is it not poignant that little black redstarts could hold up a massive white elephant?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID CARVEL,
13 Edgemont Street,
Shawlands, Glasgow G41 3EH.
carvel@compuserve.com
January 5.

Business letters, page 25

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Efficiency resolutions for MPs

From Dr M. J. Burchell

Sir, As a university lecturer I have felt under siege for several years. External audits of my institution's procedures, my teaching, my research, efficiency gains (ie, enforced cuts in income), etc, are never-ending. But whereas I have previously objected to these external attacks on my occupation, I have recently come to understand them better. It has become clear to me that any group of professionals which has control over its own activities and revenues eventually comes to serve its own interests, and not those of the general public.

Given that by its attacks on the various professions the Government seems to share my beliefs, I trust it will rapidly adopt the following:

(1) The annual costs of the House of Commons should be identified. These should include salaries, pensions, heating, maintenance of fabric, full cost of all support staff, etc. There should then be imposed on this cost an annual efficiency gain of 5 per cent. This should last for five years, at which stage further annual efficiency gains should still be imposed.

Below the waves

From Mr James Benson

Sir, Your obituary of Captain William Meeke (December 29), while rightly applauding the ground-breaking contribution he made to the development of the first X-craft in 1942-43, was incorrect in two of its references to those craft.

First, there were four-man submarines, not two-man. Second, the prospects of an X-craft's crew returning safely from an attack were not limited to "escaping from the X-craft and making for the surface".

The explosive charges that one dropped beneath the keel of one's target were fitted with time-clocks affording up to an eight-hour delay

(2) Parliament should move to a fixed five-year cycle. All MPs should collect statistics on their own performance during the life of a Parliament, including attendance record, voting record, number of speeches given, number of amendments moved, number of laws introduced or passed, number of constituents' letters answered, etc. At the end of the cycle these statistics should be assessed by an external, independent body who will award each MP a rating 1 to 5 as appropriate. These ratings should be published in time for the elections to the next Parliament. To prevent MPs playing the system, the rules of this assessment should be changed every Parliament and published only two thirds of the way through a Parliament.

Given the Prime Minister's evident desire for constitutional reform, I look forward to rapid adoption of my proposals.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. BURCHELL,
121b Whitstable Road,
Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NR.
m.j.burchell@ukc.ac.uk
January 3.

before the four tons of Amatol exploded.

Even at a submerged speed of only one-and-a-half to two knots this still enabled these 5ft diameter craft to get well clear, as witness the successful attacks and returns to base achieved by several of Meeke's successors — among them Max Shean (X 24, Bergen, April 1944), the late Percy Westmacott (X 24, Bergen, September 1944) and Ian Fraser (XE 3, Singapore, July 1945).

Yours faithfully,
JAMES BENSON
(Co-author, *Above Us The Waves*, Harrap, 1953),
64 Harley House,
Marylebone Road, NW1 5HL,
December 29.

Addressing postcodes

From Mr M. G. Harman

Sir, Why should addresses contain more than the postcode, asks Mr Ray Perkins (letter, December 28; see also letters, January 1)? The simple answer is redundancy.

A single error in any character in a postcode will generally be correctable only with great difficulty, if at all, whereas clerical errors in ordinary addresses are often corrected subconsciously without even being noticed.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL HARMAN,
Holmwood, 37 Upper Park Road,
Camberley, Surrey GU15 2EG,
January 2.

From Dr Tony Pearson

Sir, Mr Perkins will be pleased to know that I routinely use just a name and postcode on envelopes, sometimes with the first line of an address. The Post Office never fails to deliver.

Still, postcodes can be unnecessarily lengthy. I once sent a postcard from the United States bearing a friend's name and the address: 10W, UK. It reached its destination.

Yours etc,
TONY PEARSON,
Poplar Farm, IP31 3SL.

From Mrs M. D. Wicks

Sir, I believe there is every reason to use our village and county when addressing envelopes.

Many of us in East Cornwall refuse to use the Plymouth, Devon, postcode we have been given, which does not reflect our area.

Businesses assume, on the basis of the code, that we are city dwellers and quote prices accordingly, and quite unfairly, particularly for services such as car insurance.

Yours sincerely,
M. D. WICKS,
Tresco, Calstock Road,
Gunnislake, Cornwall,
January 2.

From Mr Barrie Jenks

Sir, Sir Francis Beaufort would request that Reg Gale (letter, January 1) should either change his surname to Storm, or move next door to number eight so that his postcode address would be "meteorologically" correct, ie, Gale Force Eight or Storm Force Ten.

Yours faithfully,
BARRIE JENKS,
Bromsgrove Boaters, Norwycliffe,
Redcliffe Street, Worcester WR3 7AP.
barriejenks@compuserve.com
January 1.

Roman dates lead to Latin headache

From Sir George Engle, QC

Sir, Writing 1999 in Roman numerals has its problems (report and leading article, January 1); but saying it in Latin, unless I am mistaken, needed no less than 11 syllables, viz *mille nonaginti nonaginta novem*. This makes the French *mille neuf cent quatre-vingt-dix-neuf* (eight syllables) look comparatively economical; but our almost telegraphic "nineteen ninety-nine" (five syllables) is the clear winner for brevity.

I have always wondered why the French have had the patience to put up for so long with *quatre-vingt-dix-neuf* for 99 in everyday speech. The answer seems to be that it is a legacy from Caesar's conquest of Gaul.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE ENGLE,
32 Wood Lane, Highgate, N6 5UB,
January 1.

From Mr Andrew Laurie

Sir, MDCCLXXXVIII or MIM? It comes as no surprise to read that Roman bureaucrats would have preferred to pepper their documents with long-windedness.

Museums around here are full of inscriptions made by those Romans who had better things to do (like defending the Empire) and so used abbreviations.

MIM will do fine for me.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW LAURIE,
VII St Oswald's Road, Hexham,
Northumberland NE4 1JH,
andrew.laurie@virgin.net
January 1.

From Mr Norman Sanders

Sir, "We shall all know what we will celebrate in the year MM," you tell us. Most certainly. The number MM is a nice round soft landing — an easily recognised end to two millennia — whereas its successor, MMI, is an asymmetrical upstart, an appropriate intrusion signifying the start of another millennium.

The Roman system — which didn't contain a zero — offers indisputable evidence that the Government, the BBC, the Churches, the hoteliers and even *The Times* have got it wrong by a year.

There's hope yet that the Jubilee Line will be on time.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN SANDERS,
Walnut Tree Cottage,
Tattingstone Park, Ipswich IP9 2NF.
norman_sanders@compuserve.com
January 1.

From Mr Neil Roberts

Sir, Your reporter seems to have his emperors confused.

There was no Emperor Flavius, although Flavius was the family name of a dynasty of emperors. Work on building the Colosseum in Rome (known as the Flavian Colosseum) was started by Vespasian, the first Flavian Emperor, and completed by his son Titus, the second.

Yours,
NEIL ROBERTS,
18 Chesham Street,
Brighton, East Sussex BN2 1NA.
nrob@pavilion.co.uk

From Mrs Helga Harrison

Sir, Wouldn't even a dying Caesar have remembered the vocative and cried "Ei tu Brute", not "Ei tu Brutus" (as in your headline today)?

Yours truly,
HELGA HARRISON,
3 Westfield Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea,
East Sussex TN37 7NE,
January 1.

From Miss Nan Miller

Sir, That's odd, I thought the clock reputedly stood at X to III. How could III possibly rhyme with tea?

Yours sincerely,
NAN MILLER,
35 Love Lane,
Rochester, Kent ME1 1UD,
January 1.

Web site

From Mr H. G. Dyke

Sir, My spider adheres rigidly to the Highway Code (letter, December 26). He'll spin his web with traffic lights or junctions, returning to the corner of the wing-mirror when the car moves off, thus causing no distraction.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD DYKE,
Avondale,
Alexander Place, Abercrombie,
Nr Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1SI,
December 27.

Present and correct

From Mr Ian Rae

Sir, For once I got a rather good shirt and tie for Christmas, so I tried them on and showed my wife.

The verdict? "You look different when you're clean."

Yours dazingly,
IAN RAE,
The Doctor's House,
1257 Bristol Road South,
Northfield, Birmingham B31 2SW,
December 29.

هكذا من الجهد

OBITUARIES

ROLF LIEBERMANN

Rolf Liebermann, opera house director and composer, died in Paris on January 2 aged 88. He was born in Zurich on September 14, 1910.

A small piece of transparent plastic sat on Rolf Liebermann's desk when he was director of the Paris Opera in the 1970s. One side had the announcement BOSS HEUREUX and the other BOSS FAS HEUREUX: boss happy, boss grumpy. Liebermann had been given the object as a joke but he kept it as a management tool, although that was scarcely necessary. He exuded authority, with his imposing frame, wide shoulders and patrician brow.

He had been brought in by the French Government in 1973 to save the Opera, which was in as parlous a state as Covent Garden is now. Standards had fallen and much public derision was heaped on it. It had become a national and governmental embarrassment. If Liebermann had failed in his task, then it might have closed for ever.

He succeeded. Under him it became an international house once more. The glamour returned and so did contemporary opera. Perhaps the single most important event during Liebermann's seven-year reign there was the first performance of the three-act version of Alban Berg's *Lulu*, completed by Friedrich Cerha, conducted by Pierre Boulez and directed by Patrice Chéreau in 1979. The whole of musical Europe attended, together with a number of leading politicians who felt themselves up to handling Berg. The Cerha *Lulu* was soon to become standard the world over.

That night summed up many of Liebermann's personal crusades. For a great deal of his life he had championed the Viennese school, the city where he had learnt much of his music. And his doors were always open to the new and experimental. He helped to create the stars of the future, Plácido Domingo being a major beneficiary, but he tried in Paris to ensure that his audience was not fossilised in the past.

Rolf Liebermann came, on his father's side, from a Jewish family of bankers. They emigrated from Berlin at the end of the last century, to Switzerland, where his father became a prominent lawyer. Rolf was intended for the same profession, but soon gave it up in preference to music. The family had plenty of inclination in that direction, and Einstein was among those who came to the house to join in chamber music evenings. Liebermann studied composition in Switzerland under Wilfried Vogel, while playing in a jazz band. He moved to Vienna in the mid-1930s with ambitions to become a conductor. There he worked with Hermann



Rolf Liebermann (left) with Igor Stravinsky in Hamburg, 1963

Scherchen and became the German maestro's private secretary.

He was thrust straight away into the centre of the Viennese School, and his lifelong love for Berg and Schönberg began. But the *Anschluss* meant that Liebermann, with his Jewish parentage, had to return swiftly to his native Switzerland. There he decided to give up a potential career as a conductor and turned to composition instead. At this time he met another Jewish refugee, Georg Solti, and a friendship was formed that lasted until Solti's death in 1997.

After the end of the war Liebermann's career began to take its final shape, which was a split between composer and musical administrator. He took charge of music for the Swiss-German radio station in Zurich and became manager of the Beromün-

ster Radio Orchestra. During this period he wrote a number of operas, including *Penelope* (performed at Salzburg in 1954) and *The School for Wives*, which after a number of revisions became another Salzburg opera in 1957.

The mid-1950s also brought the piece by which he will probably be most remembered, *Concerto for Jazz Band and Orchestra*, a typical Liebermann fusion of two very different groups of instruments and a reflection of his double taste for classical music and the avant-garde. There was, too, some ecceophony in *Concert des échanges*, commissioned by the city of Lausanne for its exhibition in 1964. Liebermann, inspired by the noises produced by the clattering typewriters and telephones in a busy office, scored it for 54 "industrial machines". Fortunately they did not

appear on the concert platform but were prerecorded.

Meanwhile his career as an administrator had taken off. In 1957 he went to the North German Radio as musical director and from there to the Hamburg State Opera, replacing Günther Rennert. He turned that distinctly staid house into a Mecca for devotees of contemporary opera. During his time there, from 1959 to 1972, he commissioned two dozen new works, which included Hans Werner Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg* and Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun*. He championed other 20th-century composers, such as Igor Stravinsky and Ernst Krenek, and he encouraged a new generation of singers, bringing to Hamburg early in their careers such men as Plácido Domingo, Kurt Moll and Hans Sotin.

Liebermann's success in Hamburg made him a natural choice to haul the Paris Opera out of the quagmire. He turned to his old friend from the war years, Georg Solti, for help. Solti came to conduct a glittery *Marriage of Figaro*, directed by Giorgio Strehler. Plácido Domingo arrived to sing Manrico in *Il trovatore* which amazingly had never previously been performed at the Palais Garnier. The international touch had returned to a house which had spent too much time contemplating its own navel.

Lulu apart, Liebermann's greatest Paris coup was to persuade Olivier Messiaen, no lover of opera houses, to write *Saint François d'Assise* for the Palais Garnier. He was also a considerable influence on the career of the director Patrice Chéreau.

When he retired from the Paris Opera in 1980 at the age of 70 Liebermann felt free to take up composition again (though he was to return to Hamburg for three more seasons as general manager in 1985). His responsibilities as an opera house director had given him no time for this part of his life, and in any case he was always scrupulous about not using his administrative power to promote his own work.

He wrote the opera *La Forêt*, based on the Ostrovsky play, for Geneva, where it was premiered in 1987. This was commissioned by the director of the Geneva Opera, Hugues Gall, who had worked closely with him during his seven years in Paris. Gall was a pupil who learnt much from Liebermann and it was no surprise that he was called from Geneva to Paris three years ago to solve yet another crisis at the Opera. He too, has succeeded, and the Basile will present Liebermann's final stage work, based on the Medea story, in 2002.

Rolf Liebermann was twice married. He is survived by his second wife, Hélène Vida, a television journalist whom he met when she interviewed him, and by the son of his first marriage,

HIS HONOUR
MICHAEL ARGYLE

His Honour Major Michael Argyle, QC, MC, a circuit judge from 1970 to 1988, died on January 4 aged 83. He was born on August 31, 1915.

FOR ALL the colourful controversy that frequently surrounded him, Michael Argyle was at heart a plain man's judge. He said what he thought, even if it did sometimes attract accusations of prejudice and once earned him a reprimand from the then Lord Chancellor, Lord Havers. Judges are frequently criticised for being remote from everyday life. Michael Argyle was all too often heavily involved in it, remembered by staff at the Central Criminal Court for his daily patronage of the bookmaker's shop outside the court and for his insistence on always having a television set in his robing room in order to keep abreast of sports, especially those on which money was riding. He owned and bred racehorses, was a chess and amateur boxing fan and a breeder of whippets. However, he never learnt one crucial lesson of the ring and was always ready to lead with his chin.

He was a gift to newspapers which loved to reprint the remarks for which he became famous. He freed one woman, saying: "You have caught me on a good day, because I became a grandfather this morning." He told a black defendant accused of assault: "Get out and go back to Jamaica." A sex attacker was told: "You come from Derby, which is my part of the country. Now off you go. And don't come before my court again." Any real consistency would be difficult to find in his sentencing, except that he did what was within his power to deter crime. He observed in 1987: "Quite simply law and order do not exist in this country at the moment."

He was educated at Sharnhall Hall, Derbyshire. Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, he served in the Second World War in India, the Middle East and Italy with the 7th Queen's Own Hussars. He won an immediate Military Cross for organising a

tank crossing of the Po. He had been called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn, in 1938, becoming a bench in 1967 and treasurer in 1984. He resumed his practice in 1947 on the Midland Circuit. He first came to public attention when he defended Ronald Biggs in the Great Train Robbery trial, but in a spontaneous gesture of generosity he later sent a cheque to the Driver Jack Mills appeal fund. He was later still to put up a personal reward of £100 for information leading to the arrest of muggers who attacked a woman usher at the Central Criminal Court.



Argyle became Recorder of Northampton from 1962 to 1965 and then of Birmingham from 1965 to 1970. He was never afraid to admit that he needed more knowledge and went to night school, run by Loughborough University, to learn more about penology. Later he attended a 15-shilling course on drug addiction. He was all for spreading knowledge around and launched an experiment in citizenship with teenagers sitting beside him, though they took no part in cases. He was ahead of his time in wanting a proper place for victims in the criminal justice system, calling in 1965 for reports on them before passing sentence.

Some of his views were what one would expect from a former Conservative candidate, who stood unsuccessfully in Belper in 1950 and in Loughborough in 1955. He put into practice his belief that tougher sentencing could de-

ter crime. As a result of his offensive in Birmingham against telephone vandals, jailing them for up to three years, he claimed a virtual cessation of offences involving kiosks and the restoration of effectively a 100 per cent call-box service in the city. He then threatened life imprisonment for burglars. The Court of Criminal Appeal was said to have called for a transcript of his remarks. However, in the next fortnight reported crime in Birmingham was stated to have fallen by 40 per cent.

Appointed an occasional judge of the Central Criminal Court in 1970, he relinquished his recordership of Birmingham, and found himself in the headlines over the Otis trial. He imposed prison sentences, subsequently quashed, on the three editors of the magazine in 1971. Police guarded his home after an anonymous bomb threat. The *New Law Journal* said the sentences on the three editors were "indisputably severe".

Yet it was impossible to pigeonhole him: he was too maverick to be regarded as a safe member of the Establishment. He won a reputation for trying to find work for unemployed defendants and earned himself the title of "the job-hunters' judge". He tangled with the Establishment once too often, though, when he made a speech to law students in Nottingham which he evidently thought would be reported. He said judges should be empowered to impose death sentences in cases carrying penalties of more than 15 years, and suggested that there were more than five million illegal immigrants in Britain. Lord Havers, the Lord Chancellor, severely reprimanded him in July 1967 and in October Argyle announced that he would retire the following July.

He was proud of his membership of the Carlton, Cavalry and Guards, and Kennel Clubs. He was Master of the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards from 1984 to 1985.

His wife, Ann, predeceased him; he is survived by their three daughters.

PERSONAL COLUMN

DEATHS

SCOTCHMER - Ella died peacefully in hospital on December 28th aged 88. Burial at Mortlake Crematorium at 2.30pm on Thursday, 14th January 1999.

STEELE-SMITH - On December 28th in hospital aged 79 years Hugh Frederick of Uxley. Dearly loved husband of the late Margaret. The funeral service will take place at the Priory Church of St Mary and St Corbette, Ealing on Thursday January 14th at 11.30 am, followed by cremation at Slippin Crematorium. Family flowers only, donations if desired, to Ardenia Marie Centre, Queens Drive, Hiley, West Yorkshire.

STEWART - Alison M C (nee Wilson) of Southill, Bedfordshire, died peacefully on December 30th 1998 aged 88 years. Widow of Sir C. W. P. Stewart. Much loved mother of Hugh (dec'd), Joan and Robert, grandmother of Mark, Sarah and Katy. Funeral service at Epsom Church on Thursday 14th January at 2.00 pm. No flowers but donations if desired, payable to A.R.C. c/o Tony Browns Funeral Service, Sevenoaks TW20 1DX.

STIRLING - Hilma Irene aged 84, Darling mother of Hilary and Hugh and beloved grandmother of Charlotte, Alicia and Francis. Died peacefully on 1st January 1999 in hospital after a short illness. Service on Thursday 14th January at 10.00 am at Epsom Crematorium, Crown Woods Way, Epsom. London SE25. No flowers but, if desired, donations to King George's Fund for Stroke, 6, Balham Street, London SW12 2TY.

STUTTAFORD - Sir William Roydon CBE on 2nd January at home after an illness borne with great courage and dignity. Dearly loved husband of Doreen, father of William, Dominic and Melanie, stepfather of Angus and Evarina and much loved grandfather. Private funeral, family flowers only. A Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, 10th February at 12.00 noon at St Margaret's Church, Loughborough, Leicestershire. EC22 2DQ. If desired, donations to Prostate Research Campaign U.K. c/o J.E. May, Blackwater House, Barfield Road West, Morres, Colchester, Essex CO6 4JS.

STYLIANOU - Judith, wife of Andrew, mother of Christopher and daughter of Lt General Sir Charles and Lady Deborah on 5th December at Paphos, Cyprus. Funeral at Anglican Cathedral, Paphos on 7th January at 2.30 pm.

SWINNEY - Joan Margaret (nee Burt), died peacefully in hospital on December 28th aged 88 years. Deceased widow of Tim. Much loved mother of Michael and Jeremy, mother-in-law and grandmother of four. Her family, she will be greatly missed by them and all her friends for her warm, friendly and love of life. Cremation private. Thanking the staff of St. Francis Church, Epsom, for their help and support. Burial at Epsom Crematorium on Thursday 14th January at 11.30 am. Donations if desired, to The Imperial Society of Teachers of the Deaf (I.S.T.D.) benevolent fund, c/o Powell Funeral Service, Watlington Road, Wey. GU24 0AA.

TEMPLE-REYNOLDS - Leona Douglas, aged 76, peacefully of Leamington on 4th January. Deceased beloved wife of the late Geraldine, mother of John and Alan, and sister of the late Mary. Family flowers only. Cremation private. Thanking the staff of St. Francis Church, Epsom, for their help and support. Burial at Epsom Crematorium on Thursday 14th January at 11.30 am. Donations if desired, to The Imperial Society of Teachers of the Deaf (I.S.T.D.) benevolent fund, c/o Powell Funeral Service, Watlington Road, Wey. GU24 0AA.

TURKISH - P. J. W. (Jack) on 1st January aged 88. Much loved by his son Alan and family. Funeral service at St. Francis Church, Weymouth on 14th January at 2.00 pm. No flowers but donations if desired, payable to A.R.C. c/o Tony Browns Funeral Service, Sevenoaks TW20 1DX.

WEAR - Rev. Michael John on 31st December aged 89 at Nazareth House, Weymouth. Funeral service at St. Francis Church, Weymouth on 14th January at 2.00 pm. No flowers but donations if desired, payable to A.R.C. c/o Tony Browns Funeral Service, Sevenoaks TW20 1DX.

WHEELER - On January 2nd, peacefully in hospital, Walter John Wheeler, 82, of Weymouth. Deceased husband of Peggy, father of Susan and the late Justin, and grandfather. Funeral service at the Tisbury Wells Cemetery Chapel on Tuesday January 12th at 12.30pm. Donations to D.O.A. HomeLife may be sent to c/o E.R. Hickmott & Son, 41 Grove Hill Road, Tisbury Wells, Weymouth GU24 0AA.

WINTERTON - Kaye died peacefully in hospital on 1st January aged 88. Deceased wife of the late Ralph. Much loved mother of Ann, Diane, William and Richard, grandmother of William, Edward, Pollyanna, Alicia and Luke, great-grandmother of Oscar.

WOODMANSEY - John suddenly on January 1st. Deceased husband of Mary. Much loved father of Patrick, Nicholas and Mark, and dear brother of Pat. Funeral service at St. Francis Church, Weymouth, on Thursday 14th January 1999 at 12.45 pm. Family flowers only, donations if desired, to the R.N.L.I.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES - FORD - Group Captain W. R. (Bennie) CBE. A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at St. Clement Danes, Strand, London, Thursday 21st January 1999 at 12 noon. All welcome. Please confirm attendance by telephoning Adrian Ford 01752 738 218.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE - DICKEN - Timothy, 6th January 1989. Deceased beloved and remembered.

SERVICES - INSURANCE - a better deal from January 8th. Call 0121 299 1308.

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IRON EYES CODY

Iron Eyes Cody, Native American actor, died on January 4 in Los Angeles aged about 94. He was born in Oklahoma, probably in 1904.

IN THE credits of his early Hollywood films, Iron Eyes Cody was simply billed as "Indian" or "Indian Chief", denied the satisfaction of seeing his Native American name on screen. This was evidence of the fledgling industry's disregard for native peoples, which Cody spent a lifetime seeking to change.

As an actor, technical adviser on Indian culture and an environmental activist, Cody was the first Native American to use the big and small screens to educate his audiences about Indian history and folklore.

The son of Thomas Long Plume, a Cherokee Indian, and Frances Salper, a Cree Indian, Cody came to performing as a child. His father toured in Wild West shows and circuses, putting his son with him in his act on many occasions.

Young Cody's attentions first turned to Hollywood when the Lasky players arrived in Texas for filming and used his father's barn to shoot some scenes for a movie.

His first film appearance was as an extra in 1919, in the silent movie *Back to God's Country*. It was a role



Cody in 1982: he created a fine private Indian collection

that he was to follow up with more than a hundred appearances in Westerns, including many which featured John Wayne, Gary Cooper and Errol Flynn.

Cody remained in Los Angeles, and built a successful career playing Indian characters, including starring roles in *Sitting Bull* (1954), *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965)

and *A Man called Horse* (1970). But to many Americans he was best known for a television commercial he shot in 1970 for the "Keep America Beautiful" campaign. In it, Cody was shown shedding a tear, later revealed to be glycerine, while staring out at an environment ruined by pollution. (Cody admitted later that he had originally resisted doing the commercial because he maintained that Indians don't cry.)

During the 1980s, in addition to his acting roles, Cody began working as a technical adviser on Indian matters to both television and film directors. He also supplemented his film work with television guest appearances, including stints on *Bonanza*, *Guns, Smokey and Rawhide*.

Outside the film industry Cody lectured extensively on Indian culture and created the Mooshead Museum in the basement of his home. This is now considered to be one of the best private Indian collections anywhere in the United States.

Cody met with controversy only once, at the end of his life. In 1996 the *New Orleans Times Picayune* questioned the authenticity of his Native American origins. The paper said that, after interviewing his half-sister and examining baptismal records, it believed that he might be of Italian descent. Cody vigorously denied this slur.

His wife, Bertha Parker Cody, died in 1978. He is survived by one son.

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KIDNAPPING OF THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT

From Our Special Correspondent

DUBLIN, Jan. 5. I have to inform you that my colleague, Mr. A.B. Kay, who has been assisting me as Special Correspondent of *The Times* in Ireland, was kidnapped yesterday in Dublin by armed men and taken in a motor-car to a destination then unknown.

The outrage seems to have been the work of irresponsible persons opposed to the Treaty, and the heads of the IRA in the country have taken every step within their power during the last 24 hours to find Mr. Kay and to bring about his immediate and unconditional release. Wherever responsibility lies, the incident has aroused the greatest indignation among the large body of journalists at present in Dublin and among at least a large section of members of Dail Eireann.

I was myself a witness, under duress, of Mr. Kay's removal. Pressure of work in describing the proceedings of Dail Eireann gives me little leisure in which to search a meal during the luncheon adjournment, and a number of the Press correspondents have on

ON THIS DAY

January 6, 1922

Immediate and persistent efforts were made by Michael Collins and the IRA Chief to secure A. B. Kay's release and he was freed in 24 hours, having been taken by armed men to Cork. The cause of the kidnapping was an article written by Kay.

Yesterday afternoon six of us, five representing London daily newspapers and one a Scottish paper, went to this shop shortly after half-past 2. As there were people in the shop we were asked to go into another room. A few minutes later we heard some person outside try one of the doors and apparently turn the key in the lock. Three men then entered

through the main door. They mixed with us, and one of the party suddenly produced a repeating pistol of large calibre, and after asking if we knew what this was for, said: "Is Mr. Kay here?"

The other two men drew weapons of the same pattern and, noticing that one of the correspondents had a hand in his pocket, sharply ordered him to remove it.

Mr. Kay said: "I am Kay," and the man who appeared to be the leader of the raiders covered him with his gun, while the other men covered the remainder of the party. Little time was wasted.

The leader, speaking swiftly and intensely to Mr. Kay, said: "There is a car outside and you understand you have to come into it. If you don't, by Christ, we will riddle you." As he spoke he shook his pistol in Mr. Kay's face. The rest of us were warned at the same time that if one tried to give the alarm we should be dealt with.

Mr. Kay said that he was prepared to obey the orders given him, and was then told that if he had any "togs" for his newspaper he could give it to the other correspondent. He handed over some manuscript and was then taken from the room. Before going out the leader said that no harm would come to Mr. Kay and that he would probably be back last night...

NEWS

Saddam tries to lure jets into trap

American fighter aircraft attacked Iraqi planes in the air for the first time for six years yesterday as Saddam Hussein stepped up his campaign of provocation. Six air-to-air missiles were fired at warplanes in the southern no-fly zone, which was being patrolled by F14 Navy jets and F15 fighters. Iraqi MiG and Mirage warplanes committed eight separate violations with between 13 and 15 planes. Page 1

'Backdoor euthanasia' investigated

The deaths of at least 50 hospital patients around Britain are being investigated by police and health officials amid allegations of a creeping tide of backdoor euthanasia. Seven separate inquiries are looking into claims that doctors have withheld intravenous drips from dehydrated patients, often while they were under sedation, and left them to die from thirst. Pages 1, 9

Yemen inquiry halted

Two Scotland Yard detectives were told last night to leave Aden on the first available flight after suddenly being refused permission to interview the leader of the gang that abducted 16 Western hostages. Pages 1, 12

King of the slopes

Prince Harry gave a powerful boost to the latest craze of snow-blading when he executed a small but perfect ski jump in front of the world's media, and landed on his feet unaided by poles. Page 1

Church takes to Che

The image of the communist revolutionary Che Guevara is being used by Britain's churches to represent Jesus Christ in an Easter advertising campaign. The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church have distanced themselves from the campaign. Page 3

Dome Minister's vow

Lord Falconer of Thoroton promised to "crack the whip" to get the Millennium Dome ready in time as he visited the site in southeast London for the first time. Page 4

Hospital condemned

Two senior doctors were cleared of the manslaughter of a 12-year-old cancer victim as an Old Bailey judge condemned Great Ormond Street Hospital for a "chapter of accidents and misunderstandings". Page 5

Polo is the mint with the soggy vole

In the Ayrshire seaside town of Largs, hit by severe flooding in this week's storms, one famous sweet will be forever known as the "mint with the vole". The new epithet is down to the ingenuity of a local petshop manager who used plastic Super Polo Mint containers to construct makeshift lifejackets for hamsters and guinea pigs trapped in his shop by floods. Page 3

Management macho

Women who succeed as managers do well not because of their feminine characteristics, such as sensitivity and warmth, but because of their ability to adopt an aggressive personality, according to new research. Page 6

Village green saved

Villagers have plucked a medieval green from the clutches of developers after their campaign raised the £350,000 needed to buy the land. Page 7

Lottery land plan

Lottery money is to be used instead of public cash to bankroll a fund aimed at helping communities buy Scottish estates from their lairds. The reforms will give the Government powers to evict absent landowners. Page 8

Euro 'high horse'

Britain should get off its "high horse" and join the euro, according to the German press, echoing the confidence of the Bonn Government that the Blair Administration will sign up for the single European currency sooner rather than later. Page 10

Sierra Leone funds

Britain announced that it was giving an extra £1 million to support the Nigerian-led forces fighting the rebels in Sierra Leone. The money will pay for communications and logistical back-up, but not for arms. Page 11



Tim Smith and Justin Shepherd, from Westerville, Ohio, relax in their igloo after America's cold snap forced the cancellation of school

BUSINESS

Vodafone merger: Vodafone, Britain's largest mobile phone company, has proposed a £60 billion-plus merger with its US rival. Page 21

Carpetbaggers: The Bradford & Bingley, under siege yesterday from carpetbagging investors, is drawing up battle plans to fight off attempts to take the building society public. Page 21

Traveler mover: If timing is the secret to good comedy, then the management of Traveler, the operator of airport exchange bureaux, should have been rolling in the aisles. Page 21

Markets: The FTSE 100 index rose 78.30 points to 5958.2. The pound fell 0.44 cents to \$1.6555 but rose 0.10p against the euro to 71.19p. The sterling index fell to 98.7. Page 24

SPORT

Football: The uneasy relationship between Dave Bassett and the Nottingham Forest directors ended in his acrimonious departure from the club. Page 40

Crickets: Stuart MacGill upstaged Shane Warne with match figures of 12 for 107 as Australia won the final Test against England at the Sydney Cricket Ground by 98 runs and the series by 3-1. Page 40

Racing: Nigel Elwes, chairman of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association, criticised undisclosed "vendor purchases" at public yearling auctions. Page 37

Simon Barnes: The best bit of sport this year was Darren Gough's hat-trick; the following 51 weeks will have to go some if they are to produce something as good. Page 34

ARTS

Cinema 1: One theme will dominate the big screen in the coming year — millennial angst. And the end of the world as we know it appears to be nigh. Page 28

Cinema 2: After years of being consigned to dingy, cramped venues, arthouse filmmakers are suddenly being wooed by the big cinema players with soft reclining seats, sushi and champagne. Page 28

Swing time: Stand by your zoot suits, the big bands are back along with the jitterbug and the lindy hop — and the Forties sound has never seemed hotter. Page 29

French fanfare: It is the centenary of the birth of the French composer Francis Poulenc; and it's just as well that the British are celebrating it. The French aren't. Page 30

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FILMS

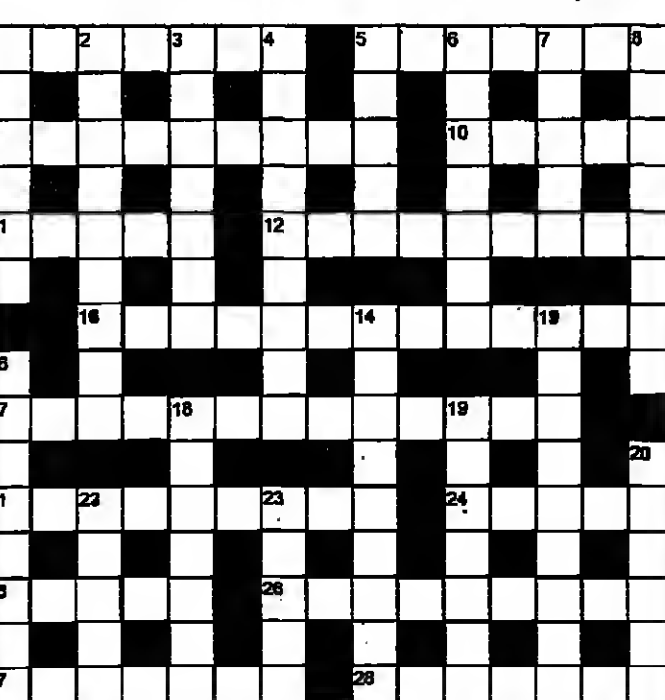
Recognise the shot? Anne Heche gets the Janet Leigh treatment in the remake of Hitchcock's *Psycho*

BOOKS

Three-page section includes reviews by Kate Muir, Jeanette Winterson, Sarah Dunant, Lisa Jardine and Roger Scruton



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,993



ACROSS

- 1 Haughty Brit beginning to prance round America (7).
- 5 Success one observed in admirable person hard to follow (7).
- 9 Jailbird accompanied by sturdy officer (9).
- 10 Crowds demanding peace vocally (5).
- 11 Rejected lass often hides depression (5).
- 12 Dismantle slate (4,5).
- 13 Constituents in seat repeatedly accepting PM's direction (4-5-4).
- 17 Club merry, rude, disorderly? Make vociferous complaint (3,4,6).
- 21 Sailor in Scottish town at roadside giving warning to passengers (6,6).
- 24 In the manner of a musketeer in part of India (5).
- 25 Enthusiastic monarch concealing senility (5).
- 26 Entangle bits at random with untidy result (9).

DOWN

- 1 Calm down old man, 100, with yen to go after one female (6).
- 2 Expertise shown, operating in brothers' house (9).
- 3 Unruly folk — quite the opposite of extended family after wedding (7).
- 4 What's the matter with warship's position? (9).
- 5 Jerky movement making one shaky after a short time (5).
- 6 Naughty child a head means to charge with misconduct (7).
- 7 Host stands outside City, a place for pilgrims (5).
- 8 He, say, accepts one delay (3).
- 14 Old soldier showing where to put bandage (9).
- 15 Concerned with rockets etc., and missile-launcher coming in at speed (9).
- 16 Butcher's got a bit of a neck offering this (5,3).
- 18 Free-thinking artist exhibiting smear outside (7).
- 19 Face given shock treatment to make a sort of speech possible (7).
- 20 Dirty and disorderly hovel in which stomach turns over (6).
- 22 Support so-called gangster within judicial framework (5).
- 23 Foreign friend meeting quiet people in America (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,992



AA INFORMATION

Latest Road and Weather conditions
UK Weather: All regions 0236 446 910
UK Roads: All regions 0236 446 911
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HOURS OF DARKNESS

	Sun rises	Sun sets
London 4.07 pm to 8.04 am	8.05am	4.07 pm
Bristol 3.48 pm to 8.44 am	8.06am	4.08 pm
Edinburgh 3.26 pm to 8.53 am	8.07am	4.09 pm
Perth 4.06 pm to 8.50 am	8.08am	4.10 pm

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FORECAST

General: cloudy and wet. South-East England and East Angles will start dry and mild with sunny spells. Scotland and Northern Ireland will have some sun this afternoon. Most places dry tonight.
London, SE England, E Angles, E England: sunny spells and mild at first, rain later. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 14C (57F).
Central S England, Midlands, Channel Islands: mostly cloudy, soon giving rain. Fresher later. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 13C (55F).
SW England, Wales, all Northern England, Lake District, Isle of Man: wet and windy, then turning brighter and fresher with showers. Fresh west to southwesterly wind. Max 13C (55F).
Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow: cloudy, windy and wet. Fresh southwesterly wind, becoming northwesterly. Max 9C (48F).
Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: rain, then brighter and colder with showers. Moderate to fresh north to northwesterly wind. Max 8C (46F).
Northern Ireland: windy with showers and longer spells of rain. Fresh westwesterly wind. Max 9C (48F).
Irish Republic: bright, dry weather driving out any rain. Generally moderate westerly wind. Max 11C (52F).
Outlook: wet, windy and colder.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b = bright, c = cloud, d = drizzle, de = dust storm, du = dust, f = fog, g = gale, h = hail, i = rain, sh = shower, si = sleet, s = sun, t = thunder

	Sun	Rain	Max	F		Sun	Rain	Max	F		
Aberdeen	0.06	5	41	f	Isle of Wight	0.16	13	26	s		
Anglesey	0.36	11	52	r	Jersey	7.3	0.01	6	s		
Arundel	1.31	12	57	r	Worcester	0.01	8	43	f		
Aylesbury	0.22	5	41	f	Leeds	0.07	14	57	r		
Belfast	0.04	12	54	d	Leicester	0.01	5	41	r		
Birmingham	0.01	13	55	c	Leuchars	0.04	5	41	r		
Bognor R	0.03	11	52	s	Litterhampton	0.03	13	55	s		
Bournemouth	4.1	0.04	12	54	d	London	0.1	14	57	d	
Bristol	0.01	14	57	c	Lowestoft	0.9	0.1	13	55	b	
Buckingham	0.16	12	54	c	Manchester	1.9	0.01	13	55	b	
Burton	0.14	14	57	c	Marlow	0.06	13	55	b		
Cardiff	4.2	0.01	10	50	d	Monmouth	0.06	13	55	r	
Carmarthen	0.28	13	55	c	Newbury	0.1	0.06	13	55	b	
Caswell Bay	0.4	0.01	11	52	d	Northwich	0.2	0.08	13	55	b
Eastbourne	5.1	0.13	11	52	s	Orkney	0.03	13	55	b	
Exeter	0.36	3	41	f	Perth	0.14	13	55	b		
Exmouth	0.36	3	41	f	Preston	0.1	0.06	13	55	b	
Falmouth	1.0	0.13	13	55	b	Roseau Wye	0.13	13	55	b	
Farnham	6.1	0.04	12	54	d	Saunders Bank	0.16	12	54	d	
Glasgow	0.31	5	41	r	Scarborough	0.16	12	54	d		
Gumfreville	0.5	0.02	14	57	c	Sheffield	0.06	14	57	c	
Hastings	6.2	0.01	12	54	d	Sherwood	0.06	14	57	c	
Hawkinge	4.9	0.01	14	57	c	Southwold	0.04	7	45	d	
Hove	3.5	0.09	11	52	b	Swansea	0.13	12	54	d	
Hull	1.5	0.1	13	55	b	Tellicherry	0.13	12	54	d	
Isle of Man	0.76	12	54	c	Time	0.03	13	55	b		

Highest temp: Havarden, Flintshire, 15C (59F). Lowest: Salsburgh, Dumfries & Galloway, 4C (39F). Highest rainfall: Spadecum, Cumbria, 2.63in; highest sunshine: Jersey, 7.3hours

AROUND THE COUNTRY

	Aljaco	Alford	Alton	Alton	Alton	Alton	Alton	Alton	Alton
Aljaco	16	61	5	52	c	Alford	15	59	s
Alford	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5
Alton	16	61	5	52	c	Alton	16	61	5

Temperatures at midday local time on Sunday. X = not available

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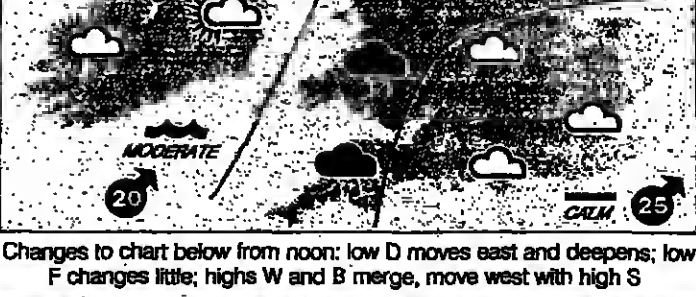
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£0
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TOMORROW



Changes to chart below from noon: low D moves east and deepens; low F changes little; highs W and B merge, move west with high S



Legend

Warm front
Cold front
Occluded front

TODAY

	AM	HT	PM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Abermouth	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2
Adwick	4.06	4.1	16.12	4.3	16.00	8.2

All times GMT. Highs in miles.

INSIDE
SECTION
2
TODAY



BUSINESS
Oil-rich Nigeria
emerging from
economic mire
PAGE 25



ARTS
Corin Redgrave
takes on
Coward's way out
PAGES 28-30



SPORT
Taylor savours
his moment
of triumph
PAGES 34-40

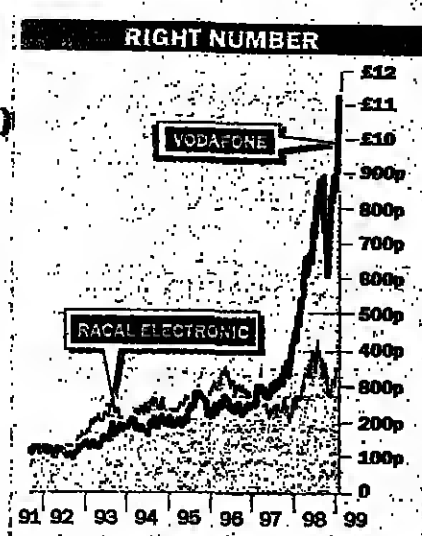
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

Britain's biggest mobile phone group seeks £60bn American merger

Vodafone on line to AirTouch



BY CHRIS AVRES

VODAFONE, Britain's largest mobile phone group, has proposed a £60 billion-plus merger with AirTouch, its US rival. The talks were revealed yesterday, hours before AirTouch was set to finalise a similar deal with Bell Atlantic, the US fixed-line and mobile telephone company. It is thought that both Vodafone and Bell value AirTouch at about \$45 billion (£27 billion).

Vodafone, which has nearly five million British customers, has long been rumoured to be interested in buying, or merging with, AirTouch, which is based in San Francisco. Both companies are focused mainly on mobile phone markets, and have complementary, rather than competitive, European operations. AirTouch has stakes in mobile phone companies in Germany, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Belgium.

Sources close to Vodafone said the company did not plan to sell off AirTouch's North

SHARES in Colt Telecom, the star performer on the London Stock Exchange, surged 8.8 per cent as speculation mounted that NTL, the Nasdaq-listed cable TV group, was about to launch a £7 billion bid. NTL, which recently agreed a £160 million deal to buy Newcastle United, declined to comment on the speculation. However, it admitted that it was interest-

American business, in spite of its traditional lack of interest in the US market. "There are long memories in some places," one insider said. "We weren't interested in moving to NTL, but the world is soon going to move to UMTS [the Universal Mobile Telecommunications System], and our attitude has changed."

Chris Gent, chief executive of Vodafone, is likely to head the merged group if the deal proceeds, chosen ahead of Sam Ginn, AirTouch's chairman. It is understood, however, that the question of management has

not yet been seriously discussed. Vodafone sources also emphasised that the deal would be "a merger of equals" and was likely to involve an American-style stock-for-stock transaction. The deal would create the world's first truly global mobile phone company, with Vodafone keeping its London listing. The two companies have about 22 million customers between them.

Vodafone's brief statement to the Stock Exchange yesterday said: "Following recent press comment, Vodafone confirms that it has made an approach to AirTouch regarding a possible merger. There can be no assurance that any agreement can or will be reached."

Shares in Vodafone, which was demerged from Racal, the electronics group, in 1991, raced ahead 61½p yesterday to close at £11.10½p, leaving it valued at £34.3 billion. Although many analysts consider a merger between Vodafone and AirTouch to be a "dream deal", it could still fall apart if Bell makes a higher offer. But the Bell deal had already been stalled over fears that goodwill charges after a merger would hit profits.

Yesterday's merger frenzy came only a day after figures showed that 2.5 million British consumers bought mobile phones in the three months running up to Christmas. Some analysts now estimate that 40 per cent of Britons will own a mobile phone by 2000, about double the proportion today.

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FTSE 100	5888.2 (+78.8)
Yield	2.74%
FTSE All Share	2704.08 (+30.91)
Nikkei	13232.74 (-153.15)
New York	8242.71 (+38.44)*
Dow Jones	1235.06 (+6.59)*
S&P Composite	
US RATE	
Federal Funds	4.75% (5.75%)
Long bond	100.74 (101.74)
Yield	5.21% (5.15%)
LONDON MONEY	
3-mth interbank	6.74 (6.74)
Life long call	
Future (Mar)	119.25 (119.64)
STERLING	
New York	
£/\$	1.6566* (1.6580)
London	
£/\$	1.6555 (1.6601)
£/¥	1.4050 (1.4068)
£/DM	2.2644 (2.2712)
Yen	164.76 (166.58)
£ Index	98.7 (99.0)
DOLLAR	
London	
£/\$	1.1760* (1.1827)
SF/\$	1.2695* (1.2665)
Yen	111.13* (111.80)
\$ Index	103.2 (103.5)
Tokyo close Yen	111.49
NORTH SEA OIL	
Brant 15-day (Mar)	\$10.85 (\$11.20)
GOLD	
London close	\$266.65 (\$266.95)

* denotes midday trading prices

Abbot looks into Norwegian link

ABBOT GROUP. Britain's largest North Sea drilling company, is in merger talks with ProSafe, its Norwegian counterpart, aimed at creating a European rival to the powerful US oil services groups. Shares of Abbot Group jumped 9 per cent to 195½p on news of the talks, which envisage a 50/50 merger of the two groups to create a £500 million company listed in London. ProSafe gained almost 60 per cent on the Oslo stock exchange in the belief that it would secure the better half of the bargain. Abbot owns KCA Drilling, the largest drilling contractor in the North Sea.

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B&B pulls plug on pursuit of windfalls

By CAROLINE MENKEL

THE Bradford & Bingley, under siege yesterday from carpetbagging investors, is drawing up battle plans to fight off attempts to take the building society public.

As word spread of plans to challenge Bradford & Bingley's mutual status, Britain's second-biggest building society announced that it had been forced to suspend the opening of new savings accounts.

The decision was taken in the face of fears that it was set to be overwhelmed with speculative account openings from so-called carpetbaggers keen to benefit from any cash-or-

share windfall should the Bradford & Bingley float on the stock market.

Conversion could bring windfalls of about £1,000 to the society's 2.5 million members. A flotation on the Stock Exchange would take it in on the cusp of immediate entry in the FTSE 100 index.

At branches in the City yesterday the society was forced to shut its doors to potential investors at lunchtime as queues snaked out into the street.

Stephen Major, a chartered surveyor currently working as a plumber, has put forward a motion to the society's annual meeting in April proposing that the board take steps to convert the society to a plc and distribute shares to members. Mr Major, from County Antrim, is also seeking election to the board.

Lindsay Mackinlay and Christopher Rodrigues, the society's chairman and chief executive respectively, were confident yesterday that they would be able to defeat the resolution, pointing out that its stance as a mutual had helped it grow over the past two and a half years from an asset size of £16 billion to £22 billion. Its branch network has more than doubled from 250 to 600 over the same period.

Mr Rodrigues said the society would have to spend about £5 million on making its 2.5 million members, and on taking advertisements in the press to explain the board's position. "We do not see the need to float. It would impair our competitive position. We would have to pay dividends to shareholders and more tax."

Mr Mackinlay said that he hoped that the society would be able to re-open for savers after the AGM.

Commentary, page 23



Back to work: Gordon Brown, centre, with his new team at the Treasury. Clockwise from left: Barbara Roche, Financial Secretary; Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary; Dawn Primarolo, Paymaster General; Alan Milburn, Chief Secretary to the Treasury; and Lord Simon of Highbury, Trade and Competitiveness Minister

Bid fever grips car industry

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BID fever shook up European motor industry stocks yesterday on repeated rumours that Ford is attempting a three-way link with BMW and Honda and on speculation that Fiat, Volvo and Renault may join in the consolidation in the sector.

With industry gossip going into overdrive during the Detroit Motor Show, shares of BMW jumped by more than 5 per cent in early trading before falling back later when both BMW and Honda denied the existence of talks. Ford refused to confirm or deny the speculation. BMW shares closed 12 per cent higher at 869p.

Analysts believe that while the link of Ford, Honda and BMW would be the dream company as the industry is poised for consolidation, it could remain just a dream. Although a takeover by Ford has been touted, industry experts believe that merger agreements are more likely.

Ford has a market valuation of \$72 billion (£44 billion) with about \$22 billion in cash while Honda is worth \$65 billion and BMW \$23 billion. Both potential target companies could be expected to attract bid premiums as they are regarded by many analysts as the best in their countries. With rumours of a tie-up with Nissan resurfacing, Renault shares closed up 1.46 per cent in Paris at 642.50.

Commentary, page 23

Soros ready to keep fund open

GEORGE SOROS, the international financier, has backed out of his decision to close the Quantum Emerging Growth Fund after finding suitable managers for the investment.

Edgar Astaire, of Edgar Astaire & Co, a leading London broker of shares in Soros funds, said Mr Soros had reversed a decision in October to wind up the \$1.5 billion (£906 million) fund which hedges against movements in emerging markets.

Mr Astaire also confirmed that Nick Roditi, reportedly the UK's highest paid hedge manager, is returning after a three-month absence due to ill health to manage the \$1.7 billion Quota fund. It is closing to new investors in an attempt to limit its size.

Commentary, page 23

Shares rise to highest level for five months

By JANET BUSH AND RICHARD MILES

LONDON shares jumped to their highest level for five months, fuelled by gains in telecoms and drugs issues, a firmer performance on Wall Street and hopes of more UK interest rate cuts. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed 78.8 points higher at 5,888.2.

Trading on European stock markets was far more subdued than during Monday's euro birthday rally as traders and investors turned cautious ahead of today when the first euro trades are settled. Paris shares closed up a further 1.28 per cent but Frankfurt's DAX index finished 0.5 per cent lower.

After two days of fairly smooth trading in the euro, City institutions will today face the critical test of their computer system preparations

when deals conducted earlier in the week are settled.

The first transactions expected to be settled are spot trades in the euro, followed by transactions in other markets later this week and next. Bankers said the day's events would prove whether their conversion work over the weekend had been adequate.

Last Friday David Clementi, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, gave warning that London-based investment banks could face significant losses through computer glitches and human errors linked to the introduction of the euro. There have, however, been few problems reported to date.

The euro was upstaged by a resurgent yen yesterday and slipped slightly against the

Japanese currency, the dollar and the pound. The yen hit its highest level against the dollar for 19 months.

Hopes of a UK base rate cut tomorrow when the Monetary Policy Committee concludes its two-day meeting are not high. A Reuters poll of 26 economists found 19 expecting no change in rates this month but 20 predicting that rates will be cut in February.

The Chancellor, who returned to work at the Treasury yesterday with his new ministerial team, faced a call from the Engineering Employers Federation to use the next Budget to help industry to maintain investment in skills and technology through the downturn.

Commentary, page 23

Travelex chiefs claim the last laugh

By RICHARD MILES

IF TIMING is the secret to good comedy, then the management of Travelex—one of the world's biggest operators of airport exchange bureaux—should have been rolling in the aisles yesterday.

Less than 48 hours after the euro's birth and the disappearance of 11 mainland currencies, the directors of Travelex have taken control of their company by buying out the institutional investors, Abbey National and Investec, the South African banking group.

Undeterred by a projected two-thirds decline in demand for foreign exchange, Clive Kahn, finance director of Travelex, believes that the firm can continue to grow by mopping up any loose change business discarded by high street banks in the wake of the euro.

Mr Kahn said: "The high street market for foreign exchange is expected to reduce by 65 per cent following the euro's introduction. Banks will turn their backs on the business as unprofitable while we have captured the main distribution points for the business—airports."

Travelex has more than 300 exchange outlets across the globe, although less than 25 per cent of those are located in "euroland". It has already negotiated exclusive agreements to operate at Charles de Gaulle and at Orly, the two airports serving Paris.

3i, the UK's biggest venture capitalist firm, is backing the management buyout by indicating that it wanted to dispose of its third stake.

how much money it has pumped into Travelex in return for a 33 per cent stake. 3i said it would take a five to seven per cent view on its investment in Travelex.

Gina Hunt, a 3i investment executive, said the company had spent a lot of time looking at the impact of the euro on Travelex's business before deciding to press ahead with its financing. "What Travelex have done is to target the key entry and exit points on the European continent. Their view, and our view, is that its distribution outlets and range of agreements put Travelex in a good position to be one of the key providers of foreign exchange," she said.

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Campaign targets victims of mis-selling

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

A £10 MILLION advertising campaign paid for by the insurance industry and intended to target an estimated 1.8 million victims of the pensions mis-selling scandal began yesterday.

As it launched the campaign the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the City watchdog, said people who had been badly advised could be owed as much as £4,000 each.

Life companies will now begin distributing information packs to up to three million people inviting them

to put their cases forward for review.

The campaign, paid for by a £10 million levy on the life insurance industry, is being run on television and radio and in newspapers.

Both life insurers and independent financial advisers (IFAs) who sold the plans in the 1980s and 1990s will have to bear the cost of compensating victims. Estimates of the final bill are between £1 billion and £2 billion.

The FFA Association, which represents advisers, said last night it hoped the advertising campaign

"would not create unreasonable expectations amongst the public".

Garry Heath, chief executive, said: "We do not wish people to believe this is some form of new lottery, a substitute for the Readers' Digest draw or a new version of *Bonnie & Clyde*. The majority of people contacted for the first phase of the review did not receive redress because they did not deserve it."

The new advertisements, which will run until April, urge consumers to take action if they feel they may have been mis-sold a personal pension between 1988 and 1994. They in-

clude the slogans: "R.U.Owed?" and "Mis-sold a pension? They O.U."

Ron Devlin, director of the pensions review for the FSA, said: "Many younger people are unaware that they may have been affected by personal pensions mis-selling. People should look out for the advertisements and if they receive the R.U.Owed? envelope, they should read the contents carefully and take the necessary action if they would like their case reviewed."

The first phase of the pensions review, which ended on December 31, was targeted at customers who were

close to retirement or had already retired. At the end of November, 388,000 people had been offered redress of £2 billion out of a total of 680,000 cases. They will not receive cash, but may be reinstated in their employers' schemes.

Phase II is aimed at people who were 35 or younger when they were sold a pension.

Pension mis-selling occurred when people who would have been better off in their employers' pension scheme were advised either to leave or not to join those schemes.

Key witness tells judge to break up Microsoft

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE most senior witness to testify at the Microsoft antitrust trial to date has urged the judge to break up the software company to break its "choke hold" on the computer industry.

Bill Harris, the chief executive of Inuit, the maker of personal finance software, for the first time raised in the courtroom the issue of what punishment Microsoft deserved if found guilty.

Mr Harris suggested that computer operating systems, a sector in which Microsoft has a near-monopoly, is similar to the water industry where competition is almost impossible and continual state regulation is a necessity.

He said: "It seems to me reasonable for the court to make a distinction between operating systems and other applications to the extent that the operating

system is an essential service, one that consumers have no choice but to use. Such market power should not be used to leverage into other markets."

Microsoft stands accused of using its dominant position in the operating system market as a bargaining chip to gain business in other sectors.

Mr Harris told the court that his company was forced to cut all links with Netscape, Microsoft's internet browser rival, to have its logo displayed on the main page of Windows, the Microsoft operating system.

Microsoft lawyers were taken by surprise when Mr Harris made suggestions about how to remedy the market imbalance. Courtroom observers report that the Microsoft camp was briefly gripped by panic. The company has for weeks been trying to dampen talk of a break-up of America's biggest company.

John Warden, the company lawyer, demanded to know if Mr Harris had discussed his views with the Justice Department, which is prosecuting the case. Mr Harris said: "It was my idea."

The solution that Mr Harris alluded to would force Microsoft to spin off its Windows division, which makes the company's main product. This would prevent it from using the threat of cutting competitors out of Windows.

Break-up speculation has pushed Microsoft stock to new heights. Lehman Brothers predicted yesterday that the shares will move from their present price of \$143 to \$185.

There are well-known historical precedents for a break-up. AT&T's monopoly was split up in 1984 and John Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company was broken up in 1911, a move that made America's richest ever man even wealthier.



Warden: quizzed Harris



Ronnie Frost, chairman of Hays, the distribution and recruitment company, which has bought 97 per cent of France Partner, a French courier group, for an initial £150 million (£16 million). Further payments of up to £50 million will be due in 2000 and 2001, subject to attainment of targets. Hays, which controls Colirail, a French courier, said the deal lifts its share of the French early-morning express delivery market to 20 per cent. The two couriers will gradually be integrated.

Amazon revenues to top \$1bn

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AMAZON.COM, the top on-line bookseller, is poised to break through the \$1 billion (£600 million) annual revenue barrier after Christmas sales more than tripled.

The company reported fourth-quarter revenues of \$250 million, up from \$66 million a year ago. The company was quick to caution that sales could fall again after the gift-buying season.

But analysts pointed out that many shoppers would have used online retailers for the first time this Christmas.

and if the new Amazon customers were satisfied they were likely to return with bigger orders in the months to come.

However, the company said that it is even further away from making a profit than before. Losses are expected to increase as Amazon continues to grow aggressively. The company has added music and video sales to its website, a business with lower margins than the book trade.

Amazon has also recently

opened separate websites and book warehouses in Britain and Germany, with further overseas expansions likely. During the Christmas period, Amazon shipped 7.5 million items overseas, more than in all of 1997.

Amazon's continued success will further fuel the demand for Internet retail stocks. Amazon shares rose more than ten times last year and America Online (AOL) went up sixfold.

AOL reported this week that retail sales on its network

had reached \$1.2 billion. But while the emerging Internet brand name companies are growing quickly, many speculative Internet flotations have failed to ignite a Wall Street following.

Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder and chief executive, who left a hedge fund to start Amazon in 1994, owns about 48 per cent of the company.

Investors have flocked to the company, driving its shares up from under \$10 a year ago to more than \$118 this week.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

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In pursuance of the provisions of the Companies Act 1985, I, the undersigned, do hereby appoint as Receivers of the assets and undertaking of the above-named company, Messrs. [Name of Receivers], of the address [Address of Receivers], and I hereby give notice that the Receivers will exercise their powers in relation to the company's assets and undertaking from the date of this notice.

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NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to the provisions of the Trustee Act 1925, that the undersigned, [Name of Trustee], do hereby give notice that the Trustee will exercise their powers in relation to the assets and undertaking of the above-named trust from the date of this notice.

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Engineers warn of severe job losses

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 18,000 engineering jobs were lost in just nine months last year as companies were hit by the strength of sterling. This year the toll could be \$2,000, according to the industry's trade group.

The losses were revealed by the Engineering Employers Federation, which said engineering was in the "grip of recession". The industry was rocked in the last quarter of 1998 by a further drop in output, a decline in export orders, a record low for domestic orders and a cut in capital spending plans, the EEF said.

Graham McKenzie, EEF director-general, said: "With UK interest rates at more than

twice the level of our European competitors and poor prospects for the rest of 1999, there is still a need for further cuts in costs at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, we would urge the Chancellor to use his forthcoming Budget to introduce proactive counter-cyclical measures, to help industry to maintain essential investment in skills and technology through the downturn."

Last October the EEF said 100,000 job losses would be clocked up by the start of the millennium. It said that, because of the time lag between high interest rates and job losses, the shedding of staff would be worse in 1999.

By JASON NISSE

Financial hot water keeps Topper out of Boat Show

TOPPER INTERNATIONAL, one of the best-known names in British yachting, has been excluded from this year's London Boat Show because of worries about its financial position.

The dinghy and catamaran maker's stand is a traditional fixture at the Earls Court show, which opened to the public on Friday. Robert White, Topper's sales director, said he could not remember a Boat Show at which Topper had not been represented.

However, Topper has suffered financial difficulties because of a fall in orders from

France and last month arranged a company's voluntary arrangement (CVA) with its creditors to avoid going into receivership.

Even though Topper's management and the CVA supervisor, Andrew White of Morris Rowland, the accountant, say the arrangement has secured the group's future, British Marine Industries Federation (BMIF), which runs the Boat Show, said Topper's financial problems meant it could not take a stand at the show.

Tony Beechey, executive chairman of the BMIF, said the position was unfortunate, but that

Executive pay gap gets narrower

CHIEF EXECUTIVES saw their salary and bonus packages increase by an average of 9.2 per cent last year — but they were left to stare in envy at the 13.5 per cent rise enjoyed by less senior colleagues. The figures are part of a survey by Watson Wyatt, the actuarial consultant, which said there was evidence that the gap in pay between chief executives and other directors is falling. Roger Down, of Watson Wyatt, said: "Board director base salary increases are ahead of last year, reflecting continuing demand for high-quality executives."

The survey also found that the average notice period required halved last year from 24 months to only 12 months, reflecting the recent changes to corporate governance guidelines in the UK, including the Hampel report, which was published in 1998. The average notice period stood at 36 months in 1994. The survey also found that the predicted demise of long-term incentive plans based on total shareholder return is not materialising. The report looked at the boards of 57 companies, including 25 taken from the FTSE 100 index.

P&U £1bn stake sale

THE Swedish Government will gain more than £1 billion from the sale of its remaining stake in Pharmacia & Upjohn, the drugs combine formed by the merger of Sweden's Pharmacia and America's Upjohn in 1995. Sweden is profiting from the sharp rise in P&U shares last year and plans to unload its 7 per cent interest by the end of the month. The sale will remove the last vestige of Swedish influence over the company, which was wracked by management rivalry and high-profile resignations after the merger.

Dutch sale by Meyer

MEYER INTERNATIONAL, the Jewson and Harrods builder's merchant and timber group, is to take a £13 million loss on the £56 million cash sale of its Dutch import and merchant business. Meyer is selling the business to William Pont, the Dutch group. Alan Petersen, chief executive, said the sale was "in line with our strategy to withdraw from the bulk wholesaling of softwood and panel products". The company said it was holding on to its Dutch tiles, kitchens and bathrooms business, which has been renamed Van de Venne van der Sluis.

Precoat prediction

PRECOAT INTERNATIONAL, a processor and distributor of precoat steel in the UK and Canada, said it expected progress in its full year, in spite of an unhelpful economic and market situation. In its half year to October 31, pre-tax profits were little changed at £1.96 million (£1.9 million) on turnover 15 per cent up to £32.6 million. Earnings per share were 8.65p (8.67p). The interim dividend remains 2.60p. Ian Williams, chairman, said Precoat was looking at acquisitions and was also confident about medium-term organic growth prospects.

WBB in German deal

WATTS BLAKE BEARNE (WBB), the claymining company, has bought Fuchs's Tongruben, the quarries, plant and mineral reserves business of Villeroy & Boch in Germany, for DM32.5 million (£11.6 million). The purchased assets include 13 million tonnes of raw material reserves. The Fuchs quarries generated revenue of DM11 million in 1998 and WBB said it expects DM14 million this year. WBB has secured a long-term supply contract from the vendor. WBB bought Berggarten and Unerwald in Germany in December 1997.

Burdene advances

BURDENE INVESTMENTS, the manufacturer of caravans and ladies' hosiery and operator of holiday parks, saw its shares soar 25 per cent after it announced improved full-year results and an encouraging start to the new financial year. The company's shares closed up 7p to 354p after it reported pre-tax profit for the year to October 3 of £8.3 million, from £6 million last year. Turnover was £101.8 million (£91.3 million) and earnings per share were 6.05p (4.05p). The final dividend of 1.70p (1.30p) brings the total to 2.50p (2.05p).

Hanson for Malaysia

HANSON, the building materials group, has entered the Malaysian aggregates market by buying the Tanah Raya Group for 100 million ringgit (£16 million). Tanah owns four aggregate quarries in southern Malaysia. Andrew Douglas, chief executive, said that Hanson was looking for a wider geographic exposure beyond Britain and the US, which account for more than 90 per cent of group trading profit. He said: "Although conditions in the region are weak, infrastructure programmes in Malaysia and Singapore clearly hold promise."

Diploma shares hit

A TRIPLE trading whammy across the operating divisions of Diploma saw shares in the industrial group crash 28 per cent yesterday. Diploma said trading in its three divisions in the first quarter of its financial year — the last three months of 1998 — "continued to decline in worsening market conditions". It said competition in the electronics market was intense and a relative decline in housing starts affected its building products operations, while its oil industry specialist steel business was hit by the falling crude price. The shares fell 46p to 1174p.

Dresdner shifts stakes

DRESDNER BANK, Germany's third-largest banking group, is to split off \$15 billion (£9 billion) of its investment portfolio by moving its large shareholdings in big German companies, such as BMW, the carmaker, into separate units. The bank, which trades in London as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, said it is spinning off its stakes in BMW, underwritten to be about 5 per cent, as well as its 10 per cent shareholding in Allianz, the insurance group, and its 10 per cent stake in Munich Re, the reinsurer, into separate investment vehicles.

Australia \$	Bank	Bank
2.75	Buy	Sell
2.75	2.75	2.58
59.52	59.52	54.95
1.65	1.65	1.51
0.5819	0.5819	0.7501
11.07	11.07	10.18
5.54	5.54	5.22
8.91	8.91	8.16
8.70	8.70	8.68
2.67	2.67	2.67
4.83	4.83	4.83
13.84	13.84	12.44
127	127	107
1.6870	1.6870	1.670
1.1811	1.1811	1.072
7.12	7.12	6.46
1.9848	1.9848	2.06
150.85	150.85	152.12
0.857	0.857	0.586
2.6513	2.6513	2.376
3.22	3.22	2.98
12.05	12.05	11.98
254.44	254.44	272.41
10.21	10.21	9.25
2.40	2.40	2.302
14.00	14.00	12.80
537.89	537.89	602.93
1.761	1.761	1.618

Notes for most denominations denominated in pence are supplied by Barclays Bank. Rates are at close of trading yesterday.

Commentary, page 23

Driving force behind mega-mergers

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Motor shows are expensive ways of creating a little excitement. Why else would they be draped with so many posing females, clad incongruously in swimsuits and feathered instead of sensible suits and driving shoes? And no wonder that such cabaret distracts from engine capacity and sends imaginations into overdrive.

That seems to have been happening in Detroit, from where the latest batch of motor industry merger stories is emanating. Yesterday's story had Ford in macho mood, sweeping up Honda and BMW. The details of the mechanism by which this would be accomplished were as scanty as the traditional motor show costumes, but the idea, despite being downplayed by those concerned, has dream appeal. The tripartite get-together would create a truly global business at a time when, in every industry, that much-banded label is becoming a reality.

It now seems inevitable that world markets will be dominated by a few big players in each sector. The polarisation in stock markets is already reflecting this view: emerging euroland's enthusiasm for the leading companies is leaving the smaller stocks looking sadly unloved. Yet the first mega-merger of the year could be transatlantic rather than trans-European.

Vodafone would dearly love to join forces with AirTouch of the United States. Unfortunately,

Bell Atlantic has spotted the attractions of the US mobile phone operator and has started talking terms. Whatever Vodafone's ambitions, its chances of coming out on top in a bid battle against the mighty Bell seem slight.

But Vodafone has been getting to know AirTouch for months and may yet harbour hopes of being able to concoct a proposal that might appeal to the AirTouch board. Wooing US shareholders could be trickier, but there is a strong industrial logic in putting the two businesses together to form a base from which to persuade Americans that the mobile phone is an essential part of modern life.

It is the suspicion that this awakening is due, and the fact that technology is at last making mobile telephony a coast-to-coast reality in the US, that is inspiring Bell Atlantic's enthusiasm for AirTouch. But the deal would also bring Bell a strong presence in Europe. Vodafone's hopes that it might pick up AirTouch's European operations as a consolation prize could be ill-founded if Bell Atlantic is subscribing to the globalisation theory.

Investors have been backing telecoms stocks with all the fer-

vour that they pursued financial services companies and pharmaceuticals manufacturers. These have been some of the early beneficiaries of the globalisation trend. But other sectors have been slower to respond. More consolidation among motor companies, for instance, must lead to mergers among the component manufacturers. Euroland is but a staging post: the world is the commercial stage now.

Crisis, what crisis at the Treasury?

A new term has brought Gordon Brown a new team at the Treasury. After 19 months, a reshuffle, a promotion and two key resignations, the Chancellor has only one of his original five ministers in the same post. And he is the superannuated Lord Simon of Highbury, who was almost invisible between the row over his ap-

pointment and being wheeled back into the daylight to greet the birth of his beloved euro.

That birth is also meant to create a euro-friendly atmosphere for publication of the Treasury's changeover plan, due within a month. No one in business need take it seriously unless the Chancellor does his bit. He must spell out when and under what circumstances he plans to ditch sterling in the Mark 2 exchange-rate mechanism, the only responsible way to bring the UK economic cycle into convergence with euroland.

The rest of the agenda is anything but new. In only its second year, New Labour has managed to conjure up images last seen in the Winter of Discontent exactly 20 years ago, which finally consigned old Labour to the wilderness.

Then it was striking workers picketing hospitals and failing to bury the dead. In New Labour's Britain it is suffering children

left in corridors and a refrigerated trailer parked behind an East Anglian hospital, to store an overflow of corpses awaiting burial.

Even Tony Blair, returning from state visits to the Seychelles, uncannily invokes images of Jim Callaghan, whose complacent comments on his return from a Caribbean conference evoked the headline "Crisis, what crisis".

After two years, Mr Brown has budgeted lots more for health. It is clearly not enough. But dare his new team be anything but ultra-cautious when they draft a new Budget for March?

The Treasury's forecasts are for slower growth this year than anticipated in the spending review. Most other people's forecasts are even lower for 1999 and the millennium year. Lower rates of income tax look out of the question again, unless they are designed to increase taxation by cutting allowances.

One group, at least, may be

hopeful. Barbara Roche, who takes over the detailed tax role as Financial Secretary, made an unexpected hit in her previous role as Minister for Small Business. The benefits of tax help to small firms also seem to have made an impression on her. Now is the time to translate that into action.

Who would want the doctor of spin?

The deliberations of the Chancellor's new team are unlikely to be subject to the vigorous spinning of Charlie Whelan for very much longer. But can this mean that job offers have been piling in to help Mr Brown of his turbulent assistant? Mr Whelan has apparently made it clear that he has no wish to find a new job in the City. The feeling is almost certainly mutual. While Mr Whelan's way of doing business appeared to be condoned and even encouraged by the Chancellor, there would be few commercial organisations that would countenance his idiosyncratic methods.

While the news of his enforced departure from the Treasury has precipitated some affectionate

comments of the "cheeky chap" genre, companies that treat their communications with the outside world as a vital part of their operations need professionals to do the job. Imagine Glaxo Wellcome, Merrill Lynch or Kingfisher allowing their relations with the press to hinge on a bar stool and a mobile phone.

When organisations are competing for business and investment, they know they need to put their message across strongly but to mislead the media is pointless: the figures will eventually tell the truth. Mr Whelan might have some difficulty in adapting his techniques to fit that world. Perhaps he is right to turn his attentions to prospects in the world of football. Perhaps Geoffrey Robinson could pull a few strings at Coventry.

Talk of windfalls

BRANCHES of the Bradford & Bingley Building Society were baring their doors against the onslaught of carpetbaggers yesterday. It was a fine sight to preface today's meeting of the Building Societies Association, intent on finding ways of preserving mutualisation. The delegates will be hard-pressed to find arguments to militate against the attractions of a windfall. They will have to take comfort in the fact that the queues outside the B&B demonstrated how financially aware the British public has become.

Abbot in merger talks with Norwegian rival

By CARL MORTSHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

ABBOT GROUP, Britain's largest North Sea drilling company, is in merger talks with ProSafe, its Norwegian counterpart, aimed at creating a powerful US oil services group.

Shares of Abbot Group jumped 9 ppc to 185p in news of the talks, which envisage a \$500 million merger of the two groups to create a \$500 million company listed in London. ProSafe gained almost 60 per cent on the Oslo Stock Exchange on expectations that it would secure the better half of the bargain.

Michael Salter, chief operating officer of Abbot, said that cost-cutting was not the ration-

ale for merger. However, he indicated that the low oil price was a spur to consolidation and said that an Anglo-Norwegian alliance was needed to take on American drilling giants such as Schlumberger and Halliburton.

Abbot sees the "state of mega-mergers in the oil sector as both problem and opportunity. Alasdair Locke, Abbot's chairman and 32 per cent shareholder, said: "The consolidation that is taking place within the major oil producing companies is likely to reduce the customer base of both Abbot and ProSafe."

The merged company hopes to expand beyond the North Sea by piggy-backing on customers, such as BP Amoco, as they move to lower cost areas in the Caspian and Middle East. Abbot, which made half-year profits of £7 million on sales of £90 million, owns KCA Drilling, the largest drilling contractor in the North Sea, as well as a drilling mud business and industrial inspection business.

ProSafe is the world's largest provider of accommodation rigs as well as the leading drilling contractor on the Norwegian continental shelf. In the nine months to September, ProSafe made profits of about £20 mil-

lion on turnover of £150 million.

Mr Salter said there would be few synergies from combining the two drilling operations. However, he said the low oil price would push the oil companies into outsourcing more of their upstream activities. "Outsourcing became the rage in 1992 but the impetus dropped off when the oil price recovered. Now it will pick up again."

Mr Locke will become executive chairman of the merged company while Reidar Lund, chief executive of ProSafe, will become chief executive after completion of the deal.

Tempos, page 24

Euclidian forecasts sharp dip in return

Euclidian, the Lloyd's insurance company, is predicting a sharp fall in the underwriting return for the year just closed.

Underwriting returns for 1998, insurance for which has just closed, are estimated to be between 5 and 7.5 per cent. In the previous period, Euclidian made 13 per cent.

Sir Alexander Graham, the chairman, said that softness in the insurance market was likely to continue. "There is still little opportunity for most primary insurers to increase their underwriting rates," he said. However, he pointed to some upward movements in reinsurance premiums.

Euclidian was reporting pre-tax profits for the six months to September 30, of £1.7 million, up from £1.4 million. The dividend remains 2p, payable from earnings per share up to 5.03p, from 3.95p.

Tempos, page 24

Blow to Kvaerner's attack on its debts

Kvaerner's attempts to cut its £1.1 billion debt have suffered a setback with the collapse of a property sale.

The British-Norwegian engineer, which has promised to unveil a new structure in March, announced the disposal of its US housebuilding activities in October. The businesses were being sold to two buyers for about £150 million (£90 million).

However, one buyer—a consortium that wanted to buy only a residential development in South Riding, Virginia—could not raise the necessary \$55 million and the estate has been put on the market again. Kvaerner had already booked a sale profit in its fourth-quarter results, which will be reversed. A spokesman said: "We are already talking to a number of potential purchasers." Fourth-quarter asset sales totalled \$290 million.

Factory jobs lost as liquidators act

About 240 factory workers lost their jobs yesterday as liquidators moved to wind up Telecom Manufacturing Limited (TML), a Lichenstein-owned company based in Airdrie, Lanarkshire.

Ian Rankin, a liquidator of PricewaterhouseCoopers, said that TML is owed £5 million by Telecom Sciences Limited (TSL), a company based in Manchester but also owned by the same parent, the Dubell Foundation. Mr Rankin said: "I've been in the insolvency business for 20 years and this is one of the quaintest set-ups I've come across. Clearly there are a number of unanswered questions."

Nigeria cuts oil subsidy

By CARL MORTSHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

NIGERIA has cut funding to its troubled oil industry by 20 per cent and promised a review of the funding of the joint ventures with foreign oil companies, including Shell, Elf, Mobil and Texaco.

The review could lead to a sell-off of a large stake in Nigeria's vast oil reserves, a move hitherto considered unacceptable for political reasons. Nigeria's Finance Minister, Ismaila Usman, said that auditors would be appointed to report on the joint ventures and the possibility of alternative funding. "The Government is concerned about its disproportionate participation in the operations of the joint ventures."

Foreign oil companies have been clamouring for privatisation of all or part of the average 57 per cent interest of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. State funding for the oil joint ventures will fall from \$2.5 billion (£1.5 billion) last year to \$2 billion. However, NNPC is still some \$700 million in arrears on cash calls to the joint ventures and Western oil companies have given warning of dire consequences of failing output if Nigeria does not increase investment.

The collapse in the price of crude oil has badly eroded Nigeria's foreign currency earnings, further weakening its ability to invest. Oil revenues are expected to be just \$5.3 billion in the 1999 budget, down from last year's \$6.3 billion which compares with an original budget of \$9.5 billion.

Battling to emerge, page 25



Michael Hurdle has been looking at a range of options to fend off W&DB's hostile bid

Pressure on Marston's

MARSTON, Thompson & Everhard, the Pindaric bitter brewer, faces mounting pressure to pull a deal out of the hat to stand any chance of fighting off Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries' hostile bid (Dominic Walsh writes).

Industry sources believe that Marston's, chaired by Michael Hurdle, has been looking at a range of options, from a management buyout to a merger with the rival brewers Morland and Mansfield, in an effort to provide a robust response to W&DB's £262 million bid.

Nigel Popham, drinks sector

analyst at Teather & Greenwood, said: "Unless they come up with something extremely creative, Marston's days look numbered. The new management team has put in place an interesting strategy, but it is unproven. Investors are only interested in the next three months. My guess is that Wolves will sweeten its offer and that will be that."

Marston's is expected to elaborate on its plans in its formal defence document, which is due to be posted out to shareholders on Friday. Other possibilities are a break-up, a sale to a white knight or the so-called pacman

option, whereby the prey launches a counter-bid for the predator.

The pacman option is considered unlikely, while the chances of a white knight entering the fray have diminished since the obvious candidate, Greene King, joined forces with W&DB. The Abbot Ale brewer has agreed to buy 170 of Marston's pubs for £80 million in the event that W&DB's bid succeeds.

W&DB yesterday extended its offer until January 29 after receiving acceptance in respect of just 0.89 per cent of Marston's shares by Monday's second closing date.

Granada £80m hotel parcel for sale

By DOMINIC WALSH

GRANADA, the media and hospitality group, has quietly put a "for sale" sign over a package of 23 Heritage and Posthouse hotels with a combined price tag of about £80 million.

The properties, totalling almost 2,000 bedrooms, are being sold as part of the continuing tidying up of the hotel portfolio acquired with the takeover of Forte three years ago.

It is understood that the hotels are being marketed in two packages by Christie & Co, the property agent.

However, analysts believe that, as with previous asset disposals, Granada will eventually be forced to sell the properties off in ones and twos.

The 15 Posthouses in question are largely older properties that do not fit the new Posthouse blueprint launched in September 1997 and backed up by a £60 million investment programme. The biggest are in Manchester, Sheffield, Runcorn and Erskine, near Glasgow.

The move puts a further question mark over the future of the 50-strong Heritage chain within the Forte portfolio, which is increasingly focused on the Meridien, Posthouse and Travelodge brands. One of the best-known is the 33-room White Horse at Romsey, Hampshire, parts of which date back to Elizabethan times.

Granada admitted that it was selling a number of Heritage hotels, but dismissed suggestions that the brand might disappear. It said that the disposals were simply part of the "normal churn", whereby lesser units are sold and better properties acquired. The group also claimed that the 15 Posthouses were merely "under re-

view" and that no decision had yet been taken on whether they would actually be sold.

Meanwhile, talks over three London four-star hotels that were put up for sale a year ago continue to drag on after the collapse of a deal with Highgate Holdings, the US property group. Granada is now in talks to sell the 325-room Russell to Principal Hotels for about £60 million, while Chelmsfield is circling the 86-room Saint-Georges, which is worth about £12 million. The 255-room Cavendish is also up for offers.

Court computer system's '£60m waste' criticised

By JASON NISSE

THE Lord Chancellor's Department was yesterday accused of wasting up to £60 million of public money on a computer system for the magistrates' courts of England and Wales.

The Private Finance Initiative deal, worth £183 million over ten years, was awarded to a consortium led by ICL, the systems services group, and Unisys, the US computer giant, yesterday after a year-long bid battle.

However, a rival consortium led by EDS, of Texas, said that it had offered to supply a similar system for less than

£120 million. The EDS team had withdrawn its bid last autumn after learning that it had been designated a category "A" risk factor by the Lord Chancellor's Department, indicating that the department did not believe that EDS could deliver its system on time.

The ICL consortium has, however, offered to deliver the system, called Libra, in exactly the same timeframe. This requires Libra to be operational by the end of 2001, allowing information about trials, charges and convictions to be delivered online to magistrates' courts and outside users.

EDS has complained to the department about how the bidding was conducted and has also questioned why Richard Stock, chairman of the user committee representing the courts, resigned at a crucial point in the bidding process. Alan Gibson, ICL executive director, said that he could not comment on why EDS had withdrawn from the bidding, but that, in the end, ICL was on a shortlist of one.

The Lord Chancellor's Department was unable to comment on the bid process, but has said in the past that it was EDS's choice to withdraw.

Lambeth Building Society

Please note that, with effect from 6th January 1999, the following interest rates will apply.

OPEN ACCOUNT TYPES		PREVIOUS GROSS AER	GROSS AER (1)	GROSS (2)	NET
MILLENNIUM (New rate)					
£2,500 up to £10,000			6.00%	6.00%	4.80%
£10,000 up to £20,000			6.25%	6.25%	5.00%
£20,000 up to £40,000			6.45%	6.45%	5.16%
£40,000 up to £200,000			6.75%	6.75%	5.40%
PRE-ISA FEEDER (New rate)					
35 days' notice after 14/01/91	£3,000 up to £12,000		7.20%	7.20%	5.76%
TESSA FAREWELL					
TESSA CHOICE	90 DAYS' NOTICE - min £2,500	7.00%	7.20%	7.20%	5.76%
OLYMPIOS SHARES	min £1,000 up to £5,000	1.75%	1.25%	1.25%	1.00%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	4.00%	3.40%	3.40%	2.72%
	£10,000 up to £20,000	5.50%	5.00%	5.00%	4.72%
	£20,000 up to £40,000	7.00%	6.40%	6.40%	5.16%
	£40,000 up to £200,000	7.50%	6.90%	6.90%	5.52%
REGENT/REGAL					
£500 up to £2,500	2.15%	1.55%	1.55%	1.24%	1.00%
£2,500 up to £5,000	2.85%	2.25%	2.25%	1.80%	1.44%
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.75%	3.15%	3.15%	2.52%	2.02%
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.50%	3.90%	3.90%	3.12%	2.50%
£20,000 up to £150,000	4.85%	4.25%	4.25%	3.40%	2.72%
BOUNTY SHARES					
£500 up to £2,500	2.95%	2.35%	2.34%	1.87%	1.50%
£2,500 up to £5,000	3.55%	2.95%	2.95%	2.36%	1.89%
£5,000 up to £10,000	4.20%	3.60%	3.60%	2.88%	2.30%
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.95%	4.35%	4.35%	3.44%	2.76%
£20,000 up to £50,000	5.45%	4.85%	4.85%	3.88%	3.11%
£50,000 up to £200,000	6.20%	5.60%	5.62%	4.42%	3.53%
FOLLOW-UP TESSA	up to £3,000 - LIB TESSA matures only	7.25%	6.75%	6.75%	
ISSUES CLOSED FOR NEW ACCOUNTS					
ORDINARY					
£500 up to £2,500	1.05%	0.80%	0.80%	0.64%	
£2,500 up to £10,000	1.35%	0.85%	0.85%	0.68%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	1.65%	1.15%	1.15%	0.92%	
£20,000 up to £150,000	1.85%	1.35%	1.35%	1.08%	
REGULAR	up to £150,000	1.85%	0.80%	0.80%	
SEVEN DAY					
£500 up to £2,500	1.10%	1.00%	1.00%	0.80%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	1.45%	1.05%	1.05%	0.84%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	1.85%	1.25%	1.25%	1.00%	
£10,000 up to £150,000	2.35%	1.75%	1.74%	1.39%	
60 DAY (formerly 2 year)					
£500 up to £2,500	2.10%	1.50%	1.50%	1.20%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	2.60%	2.00%	2.00%	1.60%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.70%	3.10%	3.10%	2.48%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.80%	4.00%	4.00%	3.20%	
£20,000 up to £200,000	5.45%	4.65%	4.65%	3.72%	
PREMIUM					
£500 up to £2,500	2.25%	1.65%	1.64%	1.31%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	2.75%	2.15%	2.15%	1.72%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.85%	3.25%	3.25%	2.60%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.95%	4.35%	4.35%	3.48%	
£20,000 up to £50,000	5.30%	4.70%	4.69%	3.72%	
£50,000 up to £200,000	5.90%	5.30%	5.15%	4.10%	
HIGH YIELD					
£500 up to £2,500	2.25%	1.65%	1.64%	1.31%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	2.75%	2.15%	2.14%	1.72%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.85%	3.25%	3.24%	2.60%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.95%	4.35%	4.34%	3.48%	
£20,000 up to £50,000	5.30%	4.70%	4.69%	3.72%	
£50,000 up to £200,000	5.90%	5.30%	5.15%	4.10%	
MAGNUM					
£500 up to £2,500	2.65%	2.05%	2.04%	1.65%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	2.95%	2.35%	2.34%	1.87%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.35%	2.75%	2.74%	2.18%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	3.65%	3.05%	3.04%	2.40%	
£20,000 up to £50,000	4.35%	3.75%	3.74%	2.98%	
£50,000 up to £200,000	5.05%	4.45%	4.44%	3.56%	
TROPHY					
£500 up to £2,500	3.00%	2.40%	2.39%	1.91%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	3.35%	2.75%	2.73%	2.18%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	3.60%	3.00%	2.98%	2.38%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.20%	3.60%	3.57%	2.84%	
£20,000 up to £40,000	4.90%	4.30%	4.25%	3.40%	
£40,000 up to £200,000	5.65%	5.05%	4.99%	3.98%	
ONE YEAR SHARES					
min £1,000 up to £2,500	4.70%	4.10%	4.09%	3.26%	
75 days' notice after 29/01/91	£2,500 up to £10,000	6.40%	5.80%	5.80%	4.64%
	£10,000 up to £20,000	6.85%	6.25%	6.25%	5.00%
	£20,000 up to £40,000	7.05%	6.45%	6.45%	5.16%
	£40,000 up to £200,000	7.25%	6.65%	6.65%	5.32%
TESSA ELITE	60 DAYS' NOTICE	6.25%	5.75%	5.75%	
MATURED TESSAS					
Balance under £1,000	2.10%	1.50%	1.50%	1.20%	
Select 90 days £1,000 and over	8.25%	5.75%	5.70%	4.60%	
Extra 90 days £1,000 and over	8.25%	6.25%	6.20%	4.88%	
Choose 180 days	7.00%	6.50%	6.50%	5.20%	
BOUNTY DEPOSITS					
£2,500 up to £500	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%	0.32%	
£500 up to £2,500	2.95%	2.35%	2.35%	1.88%	
£2,500 up to £5,000	3.55%	2.75%	2.75%	2.20%	
£5,000 up to £10,000	4.20%	3.60%	3.60%	2.88%	
£10,000 up to £20,000	4.95%	4.35%	4.35%	3.44%	
£20,000 up to £50,000	5.45%	4.85%	4.85%	3.88%	
£50,000 up to £200,000	6.20%	5.60%	5.60%	4.42%	
Accounts below £500, except as shown above	1.00%	0.75%	0.75%	0.60%	

Drug companies inject pace into new year trade

THIS could be a bumper year for drug companies. Glaxo Wellcome extended its record-breaking run yesterday with a leap of 104p to a high of £22.33 as 8.5 million shares, worth about £189 million, changed hands.

Glaxo, along with other drug companies, has benefited from new year share tips and there has even been talk that Britain's biggest drug company may be poised to make a spitting bid for rival Zeneca, up 80p to £27.74, already the subject of an agreed merger with Sweden's Astra.

Also making headway was SmithKline Beecham, 33 1/2p dearer at 88 1/2p on the back of a "buy" recommendation from Dresdner Kleinwort Benson.

Other leading shares were much in demand, especially those linked with possible corporate activity such as Baxendale, up 54p to £13.42, and GEC, 2 1/2p stronger at 55 1/2p, where Cazenove, the broker, has set a target price of 600p.

Strong performances by the drug and telecom sectors paved the way for a positive performance by the rest of the equity market. But despite further strong gains for the Dow Jones industrial average in early trading, prices in London closed below their best levels.

The FTSE 100 index finished 7.8 points up at 5,952.2 having briefly touched 5,980.5. The gains were less spectacular among the second-liners and that was reflected in the FTSE 250 index, up 19.2 to 4,870.2. Total turnover reached 962 million shares.

Retailers claiming they have done well over the Christmas period are a rare commodity these days. However, Sainsbury, it seems, is the genuine article. It says sales were good, despite a slow start that was offset by a strong finish.

In November, Sainsbury, down 10 1/2p to 268 1/2p, reported sales in the first five weeks of the second half up 5 per cent. Peter Jones, at Peel Hunt, the broker, expects that sort of growth to be maintained.

By contrast, Asda, down 5 1/2p to 158p, may have found the going difficult. Pamure Gordon, the broker, remains worried about the benefits of promotional activity and has reiterated its "sell" recommendation for the shares.

Yesterday's profits warning from the German software giant SAP sent a shudder



David Webster, the chairman, and Colin Smith, the chief executive, right, saw shares of Sainsbury fall 10 1/2p to 268 1/2p

through British software specialists. Losses were seen in EComit Group, 4 1/2p to £20.55, MMT Computing, 3 1/2p to 89 1/2p, London Bridge Software, 4 1/2p to £12.40, MSB International, 3 1/2p to 280p and CMG, 2 1/2p to £15.77. Moving against the trend, MSW Technology stood out with a rise of 15 1/2p to 135 1/2p.

Arcadia continued to hit

new depths with a fall of 5p to 164p. Earlier this week Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, undermined the Top Shop and Burton retailer, with a profits downgrade. Yesterday it was joined by ABN Amro Hoare Govett, which is reckoned to have reduced its profit numbers by 20 per cent.

HSBC Securities, the broker, has raised its recommen-

dation for Cobham, 33 1/2p higher at 71 1/2p. It has moved from "hold" to "buy" and raises the defence and civil aerospace group as "an attractive proposition for 1999".

Diploma was one of the worst-performing stocks, falling 4 1/2p to 122 1/2p after it gave warning that profits for the current year will be lower than last time round. It blamed declining trading conditions.

It seems we stuffed ourselves with record amounts of seasonal fare over the Christmas holiday. Cranswick, up 3p to 285 1/2p, says it sold four million chipolatas, cocktail and ordinary sausages in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Most of it was sold through J. Sainsbury, Asda and William Morrison.

Syner Group needed 3p to 179p with sources close to the company saying the company has not received any bid approaches. The motor distributor has been the subject of intense bid speculation that has lifted it from a low of 123 1/2p.

Traders reported some heavy turnover in Fortnum & Mason, up 4 1/2p to 34p, as more than ten million shares changed hands. This followed the put-through of at least two large lots of stock, including one of four million at 24p and 2.5 million at 28 1/2p.

Servotek touched 147 1/2p before ending 1/2p firmer at 127 1/2p on talk of a bid from City Technology, 3 1/2p better at 203 1/2p.

Over on AIM, Honeycombe Leisure reached a new high of 74 1/2p, a rise of 5p. Earlier this week, James Baer, director, bought 5,000 shares at 70p, taking his total holding to 625,000, or 2.8 per cent.

GIILT-EDGED: The bond market had a neglected place as investors sought other places to invest money. Prices drifted across the yield curve as money was ploughed into both the credit and swaps market.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt retreated 39p to £119.25 as more than 23,000 contracts were completed. Cash issues saw Treasury 3 1/2 per cent 2021 drop 20p to £151.60, while among shorter-dated stocks, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was 13p easier at £107.50.

NEW YORK: US shares moved higher in generally cautious early trading. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 58.44 points to 9,242.71.

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 9,242.71 (+58.44)
S&P Composite 1,232.66 (+4.93)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 13,322.74 (+103.15)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 8,891.08 (+61.85)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 596.51 (+7.59)

Sydney:
All Ordinaries 2,815.5 (-17.0)

Frankfurt:
DAX 3,553.91 (+1.58)

Singapore:
Straits Times 1,366.24 (+13.87)

Brussels:
BEL20 3,471.70 (+32.75)

Paris:
CAC-40 4,038.76 (+53.38)

Zurich:
SIX 1,419.30 (+16.59)

London:
FTSE 100 5,952.2 (+7.8)
FTSE 250 4,870.2 (+19.2)
FTSE 350 2,803.9 (+3.1)
FTSE Europe 100 2,654.54 (+34.39)
FTSE All-Share 2,774.08 (+30.81)
FTSE Asia Pacific 2,772.30 (+33.89)
FTSE Fixed Interest 157.73 (+0.11)
FTSE Bond Index 116.25 (+0.20)
Barracks 562.60
S&P 500 1,232.66 (+4.93)
Euro Stoxx 1,855.5 (+0.04)
Euro Stoxx 1,719.9 (+0.01)
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Spain: IBEX 3,553.91 (+1.58)
Italy: MIB 1,366.24 (+13.87)
Netherlands: AEX 596.51 (+7.59)
Sweden: OMX 2,815.5 (-17.0)
Switzerland: SIX 1,419.30 (+16.59)
Belgium: BEL20 3,471.70 (+32.75)
France: CAC-40 4,038.76 (+53.38)
Austria: VIAX 1,419.30 (+16.59)
Germany: DAX 3,553.91 (+1.58)
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Back to the Sixties but not swinging yet

Economic commentators are beginning to talk in quite dramatic terms about inflation and therefore interest rates. For many, Britain is well along a path that leads back to the low and stable inflation of the 1960s. Britain may not quite reach European interest rates of 3 per cent but could get pretty close — and that is whether the UK decides to join the single currency or not.

Michael Saunders, of Salomon Smith Barney, puts a pretty compelling case for headline inflation to drop to close to zero this year to its lowest level since 1960. Underlying inflation, he believes, will fall to about 1.5 per cent late this year so long as oil prices do not recover. This would be the lowest underlying rate since 1967. The UK argues, means that base rates will fall to 5 per cent in the middle of this year and below 5 per cent in late 1999 or early 2000.

If British businesses and wage bargainers begin to believe that low inflation is a permanent or semi-permanent feature of the landscape, base rates could fall to

4 per cent early in the new millennium. His forecasts do not rely on any assumption that monetary policy will be geared to providing sterling with a smooth glide path down to the euro some time after the next election but purely on a reading of economic trends. The main forces working in favour of low inflation include a sharp economic slowdown already under way that has left business with large piles of unsold stock and therefore pressures deep discounting, as well as very weak commodity prices.

It might be added that the global growth outlook may look much worse than it does now if the American economy turns turtle. A new report by Bill Martin, of Phillips & Drew, and Professor Wynne Godley, of Cambridge University, argues that, in order to continue growing steadily, private spending would have to exceed income by the

equivalent of more than 8 per cent of gross domestic product, double the level of last year and considerably larger than the 6 per cent reached in the Lawson boom which led to damaging bust. Debt would escalate to 2.4 times US annual income. Wall Street would have to inflate even further and the current account deficit would double. All of this is clearly unsustainable and the moment that America stops being the world's spender of last resort could be a devastating one.

The authors write: "Looking through the looking glass at America's wonderland, we conclude that should the stock market stop, it would instead fall over. A spiral, once virtuous, would become exceedingly vicious, bringing down the entire house of cards. We cannot time this pattern of events but we are convinced of its inevitability." The cumulative cost to the



world economy by 2003 in terms of lost growth could be in the order of 5 per cent of global GDP.

This study believes that Britain and Europe would be least badly affected by such events but, nevertheless, in an era of evidently low inflation, it does provide a strong incentive reason for central bankers to err on the side of growth.

that the committee has begun to discuss a so-called neutral interest rate designed neither to stimulate nor restrain the economy.

Opinion was clearly divided (not least on whether the neutral rate is a usual concept for policymaking) on where the neutral rate lies. Unhelpfully for those of us trying to predict where base rates will end up, the variety of MPC opinion put the neutral rate at anywhere between 4.5 per cent and 6.5 per cent.

However, there is a camp on the MPC that believes not only that the neutral rate is significantly below the 6.75 per cent base rate that prevailed before December's half-point cut but also that base rates should currently be set below that neutral rate.

David Mackie, of JP Morgan, who has, beyond the call of duty, looked at the evidence of the past 170 years, concludes that a neutral

rate for Britain would be about 4.5 per cent. All of this suggests that there is scope for UK base rates to fall to levels not seen for a generation. It does not, however, make a cast iron case for a cut tomorrow.

Among the arguments for waiting a month are uncertainty about how the January sales have gone; some evidence that the recent decline in sterling is arresting the drop in exports; a concern not to be the odd man out in cutting rates when the Fed and the European Central Bank are on hold and nervousness about another cut undermining sterling in the potentially volatile first weeks of trading in the euro. When in doubt, the MPC has sometimes waited to go through the full analytical process involved in publishing its quarterly Inflation Report before coming to a decision on rates — and the next report is in February.

However, there are also arguments for moving now. If there is general agreement on the MPC that rates have not bottomed, what is the sense of waiting, particularly as even Eddie George appears to have bought into the Goodhart/Buiter school of activism. Inflation is low and falling and the MPC has made it clear that it will be as assiduous in avoiding an undershoot of the inflation target as an overshoot. In addition, since its last Inflation Report, independent forecasts for both growth and inflation have been scaled back.

Whatever the outcome this week, it is evident that the MPC is not blind to the possibility of inflation and interest rates at 1960s levels and that the influx of academic outsiders has brought new dimensions, a more active consideration of different economic concepts and varied instinctual approaches to the process of rate setting. This intellectual flux is fascinating but, together with a dramatic change in global economic trends from the 1970s and 1980s, it makes monthly rate decisions far harder to call.

Oil-rich Nigeria battles to emerge from its crumbling economy

Brian Wilson explains why Britain must encourage democracy in 'new' country

The enigma of Nigeria is summed up in the queues, hundreds of yards long, for petrol at every filling station in Lagos and Abuja. Here is a country, easily capable of producing two million barrels of oil a day, which cannot supply its own people with enough fuel to keep their cars running.

There are plenty of explanations. The oil refineries are clapped-out and desperately in need of investment. Civil strife in the Delta area is significantly undermining oil production. But more fundamentally, this is a rich country that has been robbed and mismanaged for so long that the cupboard is finally just about bare.

So why lead a trade mission now, when perceptions of Nigeria as an economic basket case remain strong? The answer lies in the fact that political change is in the process of happening. As yet the outcome is uncertain. But there is a real, unmistakable determination to make it work and if that can be achieved, then economic transformation might not be far behind.

We should know within months whether the transition to democratic government has been successful. In February, there will be elections both for a national assembly and to choose a president. You can never be certain in Nigeria, but the indications are that the new administration will be in place by May.

The transitional Government is led by General Abubakar who has no intention of standing for the presidency — a useful starting point in any such process. Abubakar has assembled an impressive team of ministers who are at pains to make it clear that they are on very short-term contracts. Their job is to hand over as stable a society and as secure an economy as possible to their elected successors.

These objectives mean that merely marking time until they are not an option. The appalling regime of General

Abacha, both brutal and spectacularly corrupt, ended last June with the death of its leader. He left behind a crumbling economy and widespread civil strife in the neglected areas from where the oil wealth flows. Britain distanced itself from Nigeria after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, which also led to Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth.

Abubakar's commitment to human rights and to hand-over quickly to a civilian government has opened the door to improved diplomatic and commercial relations. My own visit was a direct follow-through from the successful encounter between Abubakar and Tony Blair in London last September.

There is no doubt that Nigeria wants to strengthen economic links with Britain (although even now it is an export market worth some £400 million per year). There is a very direct correlation in the minds of many senior figures — often British educated — between happier days for the country and the residue of British influence.

This was perhaps at its strongest when we met Alhaji Alfa Wali, the impressive Agriculture Minister, and his team. They need investment both to modernise small farming, which sustains more than three quarters of the population, and also to develop much larger units of commercial production. They attribute halcyon days in the not-so-distant past, when Nigeria was a net exporter of food, to the legacy of British agriculturalists and the 18 research institutes they left behind. All of them are now defunct.

In this, and other key sectors of the economy, there is plenty of interest among British companies, both in trading with and investing in the "new" Nigeria. But there are many obstacles of both substance and perception to be overcome.

Ministers in the transitional Government know that there are hard decisions that need to be taken quickly if interest and



Tony Blair welcomes General Abubakar to Downing Street during his visit last September

goodwill are to be capitalised upon. And they have shown themselves willing to grasp the nettle. When I met Alhaji Usman, the Minister of Finance, he gave a clear understanding that the dual exchange rate — a blatant scam that offers a huge competitive advantage to those who are in a position to exploit naira-dollar conversion — would be abolished.

Now that has happened. This was an act of courage as

it threatened the vested interests of powerful individuals. On the other hand, many issues still need to be addressed. There is the uncomfortable fact that Transparency International, the research group, has consistently placed Nigeria at the bottom of its Corruption Perceptions Index. It would go a long way towards encouraging investor confidence if the Nigerian Government was seen to take a definite stance to pro-

more transparency and discourage corruption.

The UK's Export Credit Guarantee Department has had its fingers burnt, over the past 20 years it has extended more than £3 billion, and there must be some indication of how inroads will be made into that debt. But the Nigerians are well aware of these difficulties and appear determined to address them quickly — not least in order to get

some of the toughest decisions out of the way before the elected government takes over.

Another of these hard decisions is whether to press ahead with a privatisation programme in advance of the presidential elections. This is the signal that many foreign investors are waiting for and transitional ministers insist that it will happen. It is less an ideological matter than a necessary prerequisite to securing investment that Nigeria's utilities and infrastructure so desperately need. Oil refineries, power supply and telecommunications could soon be open to offers.

Perhaps the most menacing of all Nigeria's problems is the lawlessness that has grown up as a reaction to the previous Governments' failure to commit an equitable proportion of the oil revenues to the communities who live where the stuff is produced. The oil companies are looking to the Government to maintain the rule of law. But it is unlikely that this will have any long-term effect unless there is clear evidence that the commitment, to spend 13 per cent of oil revenues in the production areas, is fulfilled.

On top of all the other problems that they face, the transitional Government is trying to put together a budget that is based on an oil price of \$10 per barrel. That certainly means, even on the most favourable prognosis, that there is going to be no early return to the prosperity of the 1970s for the Nigerian economy as a whole.

Yet there are plenty of British companies that have continued to trade successfully and profitably. The sheer vastness of the market, more than 100 million people, allied to the clear potential for economic success if only the political horror stories can be avoided, mean that Nigeria is a country that cannot be ignored.

The next few months are likely to tell us a lot about whether a democratic future really does exist and, if so, what it amounts to. It is a process we must encourage.

The author is the Minister for Trade. He led a delegation, including representatives from Shell, SmithKline Beecham and Standard Chartered, to Nigeria in December.

Pound is being made a scapegoat for the misfortunes of pig-farmer

From Mr Gerry Hanson

Sir, it really won't do for Fraser Nelson to blame the misfortunes of pig-farmer Donald Ross on the so-called strength of the pound (The euro and me, December 24). The market price of pigs has nothing to do with the exchange rate, and everything to do with the EU policy of encouraging rearing of pigs to over-supply, plus the fact that most EU countries have much lower, and therefore cheaper, standards of animal welfare than we have. Mr Ross may be guilty of failing to research the market before switching from cereal production, or just unfortunate in timing, but he cannot legitimately blame the pound.

The pound is not strong. Would that it were — there are great benefits in a strong currency: lower food, raw materi-

al, packaging and freight costs, and potential for lower fuel costs if our greedy Government stopped exploiting the benefit by constantly raising fuel tax. Twenty-five years ago when we entered the EEC, we had a small trade surplus with other EEC members; now we have an annual deficit with our EU partners in excess of £8 billion. Then, for a German to buy a pound's worth of British goods, he had to withdraw from his bank DM8.25; now, he need take out only DM2.80. Is that strong? Anyway, can anyone name a single Western country that prospered for long with a weak currency?

Yours faithfully,
GERRY HANSON,
Potters Lodge,
74A Slough Road,
Iwer Heath,
Buckinghamshire, SL20 0DY.

Interest swings and tax roundabouts

From Mr A. D. Gatling

Sir, Janet Bush, in her interesting piece on interest rates (January 5) points out that the difference between our rates and those of euroland is unlikely to be maintained. More durable, however, is likely to be the difference in tax rates.

At an overall 35 per cent here, compared with an average of 45 per cent on the Continent, we would lose 15 per cent of after-tax income if we were forced to "harmonise" our tax

rates, against which any temporary saving on mortgages is small beer.

Indeed, one wonders whether this may be the chief attraction of EMU to Mr Blair. Once signed up, he would then be able to renege on his election promise not to raise taxes by claiming *force majeure*.

Yours faithfully,
A. D. GATLING,
White Lodge,
Berwick St James,
Salisbury, SP3 4TZ.

Background to Berisford pay

From the Chairman of the Remuneration Committee, Berisford

Sir, City Diary (December 17) wrongly suggested that Berisford's chief executive enjoyed a big pay increase last year despite a fall in the group's profits.

In 1998, profits before tax and exceptional — the best guide to performance — rose 36 per cent and earnings per share 30 per cent, although a £24.9 million exceptional profit on the repurchase of loan stock in the previous year did have the effect that profits at

the pre-tax level were down 17 per cent year-on-year.

Your report of November's results dealt with this correctly. In the past four years, underlying earnings per share have increased four-fold. Mr Bowker's bonus was genuinely performance-related.

Yours faithfully,
PENNY HUGHES,
Chairman,
Remuneration Committee,
Berisford plc,
1 Baker Street,
London, W1M 1AA.

Ship comes in

BOB GOODALL, co-ordinator at SOBS, the pressure group devoted to keeping our building societies, has had to part with a family heirloom to secure funds needed to disrupt the Halifax takeover of the Birmingham Midshires.

Next week, Bonhams will auction a painting left to him by his late father, Sir Ldr Bill Goodall. Ship entering the Thames estuary by the marine artist Norman Wilkinson is of any way, it is expected to raise between

£2,800 and £3,000. "My late father would have approved," he says.

Goodall senior was public relations manager for Glaxo, and also a campaigner. "When he stood for Parliament a number of times, he personally paid the required deposit."

A DAFT linguistic debate over the euro fit, of all places, Moscow, where the authorities have deemed the currency officially sedes.

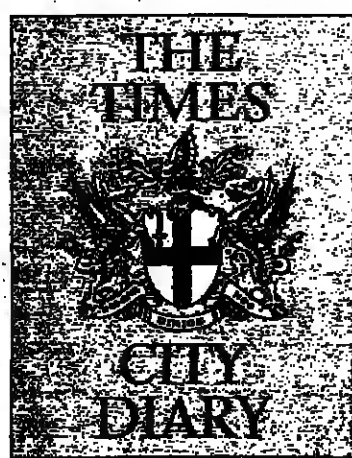
In European languages where they have to decide one way or the other, the euro is a bouncing boy — "un euro", "der euro", etc. In Russian, "yevro" should be neuter. But the local media have had it swinging both ways, either masculine or feminine.

So the central bank, sensing controversy, has reversed to Stalinist ways: "There is no official decision," said a spokesman.

Caught out

THE approach for AirTouch seems to have caught Chris Gent, Vodafone chief executive, in the outfield. He is on holiday in Australia watching the cricket, because the company is the England team's sponsor.

He has been there since December 26 and is expected back on Monday. Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth, Vo-



dafone's chairman, is head of the England and Wales Cricket Board, and Gent himself is apparently mad keen on the sport.

Vodafone concedes that it is not terribly convenient to have your chief executive on the other side of the world during what is potentially the company's biggest deal. However, "the mobile phone network works in Australia extremely well," I am told.

Death wish

THE annual Savoy Lecture on the hospitality industry is usually addressed by a bigwig hotelier or whatever. But this year Anna, the organisers have gone for the film-maker Michael Winner. Winner assures me he was the industry's own choice — "they're either masochistic or they have a sense of

humour." His poisonous views on restaurants are well known from his column in *The Sunday Times*. It is hard not to warm to someone who believes the British public are being ripped off every time they open a table napkin, and he intends to say so at the lecture on February 4.

"We're the most inhospitable people in the world," he tells me — appropriately, from the Caribbean. "The English are just mugs when it comes to accepting bad service and then fuming about it afterwards."

BRITISH companies are so proud of sacking people that they announce the numbers years in advance and then add a few more when the time comes, just for completeness. Companies in euroland have not quite caught up with this.

One has just announced 1,000 redundancies for 1999, including 564 jobs it was supposed to cut last year but did not quite get around to. Guess who? Crédit Lyonnais, the French bank officially estimated to have cost taxpayers Fr150 billion, or as near as dammit £15 billion.

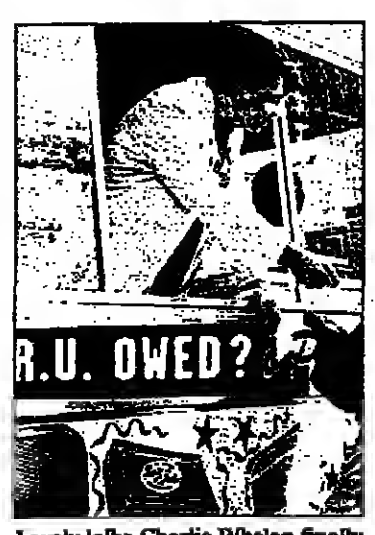
Free Whelan

MY PICTURE is of Charlie Whelan, spin-doctor turned ice-cream salesman, in the new publicity campaign by the Financial Services Authority on pensions mis-selling. Seriously, those at the FSA who have seen the commercial say the resemblance is breathtaking. Look out for it.

Incidentally, I hear there is serious talk of introducing a pensions mis-selling storyline into *EastEnders*, the demonic soap opera. In the same way that *The Archers* occasionally lectures us on warble-fly. However, a colleague points out that it is unlikely any of the cast declare enough income to fund a personal pension.

In fact, the real reason the story will never appear is more fundamental. Any member of the *EastEnders* cast mis-sold a pension is more likely to solve the problem by taking a sawn-off shotgun to the head office of the firm responsible than by writing a letter to the FSA.

MARTIN WALLER



Lovely jolly: Charlie Whelan finally leaves the Treasury for a real job



"Hand over an account application form and nobody will get hurt..."

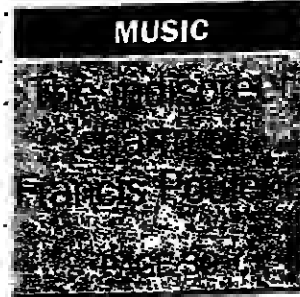
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THE TIMES ARTS



A date with the end of the world

FILM: This year movie-makers are jumping on the millennium bandwagon, says James Mottram

From the predictions of Nostradamus to the Y2K bug, millennial angst has struck deep. With more than 2,000 books published on the subject since the 1950s, uncertainty and insecurity appear to govern most of the thinking surrounding the millennium. And the malaise has started to infiltrate our cinemas.

Apart from Kathryn Bigelow's 1995 film *Strange Days*, which depicted anarchy on the streets of Los Angeles on December 31, 1999, few film-makers have so far attempted to represent millennial fears. But now a glut of films is on the way to guide—or frighten—us towards the millennium. And the world has never looked more unstable, on celluloid at least.

First up is Darren Aronofsky's brash, low-budget debut *π*, a near-future piece of prophetic madness. Not strictly a millennium film, it nonetheless harnesses an impending sense of millennial paranoia through its protagonist, the reclusive mathematician Max (Sean Gullette). Max is being pursued by Wall Street brokers and Hasidic Jews, both convinced that the numerical code he has uncovered can unlock the stock market and Kabbalah texts respectively.

Aronofsky, who does not subscribe to an end-of-the-world hysteria, envisages the end of the century as a surreal

istic distortion, inspired by his childhood. "No matter how much we laugh at the apocalypse and millennial fever, I think some of us have nightmares about it," he says. "As a kid I saw Orson Welles's documentary about Nostradamus. It was about how this mad guy from the Middle East would nuke New York City in 1999. So growing up there I was always terrified of the millennium."

"On the cinema screen, at least, the world is doomed"

While *π* can also be read as a universal expression of our fears of technology, other films have used the millennium as a reference point for examining contemporary culture at the end of the 20th century. *2000 Seen By* is an international anthology of ten films devoted to the millennium. With each film co-funded by the French company ARTE, the collection was initiated by the producers Caroline Benjo and Carole Scouta, the latter responsible for the Flemish film-maker Alain Berliner's 1997 debut *Ma Vie en Rose*. Berliner is one of the directors called on to meditate on the impending date with *The Wall*, his magical realist examination of Belgium's cultural, linguistic and political boundaries.

Benjo sees the body of work as a shared set of visions. With films representing five continents, including Abderrahmane Sissako's examination of exile in *Africa Libre* (on *Earth*), the collective view-



Bleak vision: Riot police are on the streets of Los Angeles on New Year's Eve 1999 in Kathryn Bigelow's 1995 *Strange Days*, one of the first films to deal with the new millennium

point appears to be pessimistic reflection. "The millennium doesn't mean anything any more," argues Benjo, who partly initiated the project as a response to the growing delirium surrounding the date. "My life isn't going to change in 2000, and everybody knows that. I think we're all going to perceive it as the beginning of one thing and the end of another. It's time for you to say 'Well, this is what I think we did with ourselves, our lives, our culture'. If you see it under this light, each film says something of what it means to finish the 20th century."

Other culturally specific films in *2000 Seen By* bear this

out. Indie king Hal Hartley's *tête-à-tête* between Christ and the Devil in New York City, *The Book of Life*, is a controversial retelling of the Book of Revelation, with an ironic side-swipe at Big Apple life. Tsai Ming-Liang's examination of personal and political insecurity, *The Hole*, is an environmental warning sign about the accelerated decay of his country, Taiwan.

Midnight, the Brazilian Walter Salles's follow-up to his forthcoming *Central Station*, depicts the coming together of a murderer and a potential suicide case. As Salles points out, it reflects upon the limitations of his own country, a place

"that has declined into decadence without ever having peaked."

The most prominent film in *2000 Seen By* is the Canadian writer-director-actor Don McKellar's *Last Night*, an apocalyptic look at the lives of several Toronto inhabitants on the eve of world destruction. First shown at the Cannes Film Festival when *Armageddon* and *Deep Impact* were similarly predicting global meltdown, McKellar's film is less sensationalist.

"I thought of the practical implications of the event," says McKellar, whose film de-

picts people performing last-chance acts—from bizarre sex to reliving family yuletides gone by. "It's one thing to think 'I'd fly to Paris and climb the Eiffel Tower'. The chances are you wouldn't get that flight, not many pilots would be flying on their last day. I wanted to stick with people who built systems to protect themselves and decided to carry on regardless."

Metaphysical or practical, independent directors appear unable to get past the notion that the world is facing its demise. As Benjo points out, "Each filmmaker had difficulty going over the date. Very few of them talked about Janu-

ary 1 in the year 2000." Not so for Hollywood, which has finally jumped on the millennial bandwagon. Written by the creators of *The X-Files*, *The Mark* is set to star Will Smith, saving the Earth once again as the planets align at the end of 2001 to rip us apart.

The British take on the millennium comes from Kay Mellor, who makes her directorial debut with *Fanny and Elvis*. A romantic comedy with Ray Winstone and Kerry Fox as a couple, expecting their first baby, as the millennium approaches, it offers a "more homespun hope. Mellor, who created TV's *Band of Gold*, is more optimistic than most, pre-

fering a down-to-earth look "at somebody trying to get about their ordinary life on the night of the millennium."

Like Benjo, Mellor sees her film as an opportunity to reflect on what has happened and will happen in the world around us, but without scare-mongering. "There's a lot of fear around. I can't imagine for one minute planes will drop out of the sky. We watch too much sci-fi. I can't imagine all these horrendous things are going to happen. We can put people on the Moon; surely we can deal with a few figures changing."

• opens on Friday

In the lap of arthouse luxury

After years of neglect, discerning filmgoers are being wooed with soft seats and sushi, Simon Tait discovers

Arthouse filmgoers have never been so popular. They are being brought in from the cold—not to mention the dingy, draughty and often smelly—to the luxurious, to multiplexes with special auditoriums and programmes shaped to their taste.

Warner Village Cinemas is offering them theatres with large screens and digital sound, where their leather seats recline at the touch of a button, where popcorn and Coke give way to sushi and champagne brought to their individual tables and individual ice buckets. Meanwhile, in partnership with City Screen, Mayfair Entertainment, owner of the Curzon cinemas, has gambled more than £2 million to eschew mainstream programming in its Shaftesbury Avenue cinema for a three-screen arthouse.

The new Curzon Soho is open from 8am, providing the kind of comfortable, clubby feel that the National Film Theatre had in mind for its proposed West End presence before it had to drop its plans. There is a street-level bar serving coffee, beer, sandwiches, magazines and gossip, a basement bistro-style café which doubles as an art gallery, and programming on three screens that covers the arthouse spectrum from nostalgia (such as *Capra's It's a Wonderful Life*, in the current programme) to cult (like *Imamura's The Seal*).

Thanks to multiplexes, the 52 million UK cinema admissions of 1994 have climbed to 130 million—but without any serious analysis of who the filmgoers are or what they want. Now cinema owners are not only waking up to the fact that their audiences have grown up, they're realising that they are wealthier, too.



Melbourne's Jam Factory — "the most successful cinema in Australia" — sets the UK pattern

"People who go to arthouse films care about the environment in which they see their choice of movies, and there is a growth in older audiences," says Mayfair's chief executive, Marc Vlesing. "But we can't afford to commit a single screen for specialist films, so we can open a new release in the bigger 249-seat auditorium and then move it to the smaller 130-seat or 110-seat one to give the film a proper season. We are serving a neighbourhood. Soho, and we intend to open more designed for the neighbourhoods they're in. A lot of people are coming here during

the day to meet people and have a drink without seeing a movie at all. There's an ageing audience in a younger market, and we're in danger of leaving them behind." Does it work? Officially, Curzon says it's too early to tell other than that there's been a "transformation" in ticket sales since they opened early in October, but insiders say they're selling as many tickets in a day as they were in a week.

Warner Village, the new kid on the high street, now has 22 multiplexes in Britain and more than double that in three years. Among the develop-

ments it is about to announce is a 16-screen multiplex for Nottingham, on the site of the old Evening Post. Two of the auditoriums will be Europa Screens, dedicated to what Warner Village — a partnership for the UK between Warner Brothers and the Australian Village Roadshow — prefers to call non-mainstream rather than arthouse, with a bar slanted at the filmpoor devoted to subtitles. Two will be VIP Screens, the offspring of a highly successful Australian gamble. A year ago, three weeks before the new Village Roadshow multiplex was due

to open on the site of a jam factory in Melbourne's trendy Chapple Street, the company suddenly concluded that it was ignoring an older and richer audience and decided on a complete change of tack. In the parlance of our airline-wise culture, instead of consigning all its customers to tourist class, why not upgrade a significant element to business class? So in four of the 16 auditoriums, two-thirds of the seats were torn out and recliners put in with cable service and all the trimmings, plus free popcorn if required. Ticket cost £25 compared with £11 for the other screens.

One year later its project manager, Simon Jeffries, is in Britain as Village's European projects manager. "The Jam Factory was instantly full and is the most successful cinema in Australia," he says. The Nottingham follow-up for 2000 is the first of many planned "bespoke" developments, tailored for their communities: Birmingham is to get a 30-screen Star City, also in 2000; in 2003 Battersea Power Station gets 25 screens and 8,000 seats; even medieval Worcester is to get a six-screen version.

"We're offering more bang for your buck, catering for an audience that is cash-rich and time-poor," Jeffries says. "It's not about elitism, it's about aspiration. People will pay more for the extra service in the VIP auditorium where the fuss of getting food and drink is sorted for them, and we also believe that you should be able to watch foreign-language or non-mainstream movies in a classy, European ambience. Multiplexes were becoming production lines for feeding teenagers action movies, but there is another dimension to the audience."

Clunk that clicks

THEATRE

Song at Twilight is far from Coward's best play. As I observed Corin Redgrave in Sisyphus-like combat with some of the most lapidary dialogue the Master ever wrote, I found myself wondering if it is even particularly good. But it has a special importance because it is the piece in which, emboldened by the spirit of the mid-1960s, the ageing Coward directly confronted the great unpublicised truth of his life, in the person of Sir Hugo Latymer, dramatist and novelist, he wrote directly about the predicament of the homosexual for whom fame and fortune mattered more, much more than emotional candour.

But note that word, "predicament". Latymer is not a self-portrait, nor is *Song* quite the confessional play some hold it to be. I don't know why Sheridan Morley, who is Coward's biographer as well as director of the highly competent staging at the King's Head, says in the programme he has "never quite believed" the author's claim that he based the play on Somerset Maugham. Latymer lacks Coward's grace, kindness and wit, and has spent his life flaunting a spurious heterosexuality, not least by making the sort of loveless marriage that would have morally disgusted Coward. That suggests Maugham, Maugham and Maugham again.



Nyree Dawn Porter does her best to fizz as Coward's *Cartolina*

Yet Maugham's predicament was also that of Coward, Rattigan, and several other writers impelled by prejudice and a numbing censor to translate homosexual into heterosexual experience. It is a truism that *The Deep Blue Sea* and *Private Lives* fall into precisely that category. So if an actress called Cartolina Gray had arrived in his hotel suite, announcing her intention to hand some compromising letters to an American academic with biography on his mind, Coward would not have been vastly more enchanted than Latymer or Maugham. To that extent *Song at Twilight* lets light into his secret places.

But it is a pretty clunky piece. Even when Nyree Dawn Porter's sharp-witted Cartolina is exasperating Hugo with old memories, importunate requests and cutting accusations, the language refuses to fizz as it would have banged and fizzed in Coward's 1920s or 1930s. And would even Maugham at his most pomp-

ous have answered an innocent remark about feeling the threat of rain in one's bones with "that particular form of prescience is rheumatic rather than clairvoyant"? Given so few opportunities for humour, Redgrave falls back on a lumbering superciliousness, and impresses mainly when fear and pain touch his half-ostentatious heart.

Nevertheless those moments, plus a touching profession of understanding, loyalty and grief from Kika Markham as Hugo's much-misused wife, do give the play some of the eloquence Coward wanted. Yes, Latymer's sexual misadventures have cost him and others a lot. But, yes, he is right to protest that "even when the actual law [against homosexuality] ceases to exist there will still be a stigma attached to the love that dare not speak its name in the minds of millions of generations to come".

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

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Count's lady sings the blues

The story goes that Countess Bradford brought herself to the attention of her most celebrated employer, Count Basie, and suggested that he would be missing out if he didn't hire her to sing with his early-1980s orchestra. Her chutzpah paid off: she stayed nine years with the band, winning two Grammys along the way, and subsequently launched herself on a solo career so successful that Hollywood has reportedly taken out an option on her life story.

It was thus a little surprising to hear her confess to being nervous about her first appearance at Ronnie Scott's, particularly since she treats her audience with the formidable combination of strident hectoring and intimate teasing patterned by the likes of her countrywomen Oprah Winfrey and Ricki Lake. Such nerves were in any case thoroughly banished by the time Bradford had romped through her opening number, *Then There Eyes*. Here is a no-nonsense, attention-grabbing voice well-suited to familiar up-tempo belters such as this, and with a neat yet assertive trio — pianist John Rangel, bassist Orlando Le Fleming, drummer Mark Fletcher — providing solid propulsion, she was quickly into her considerable stride.

A strong but soulful visit to *Maybe September* was personalised by being preceded by the assertion that Bradford's mother — also a singer — made her do her chores to fit a skilfully scatted version of Mr Pagani's sparked off a string of self-deprecating anecdotes

JAZZ

about the number of people — including her father, the trumpeter Bobby Bradford — who had warned her not to tread on ground hallowed by Ella.

It is ballad material, though, that provides a singer's acid test. Bradford's controlled glide through the melancholy end-of-relationship lament *Where Do You Start*, while not quite reaching the emotional depths explored in Shirley Horn's version, nevertheless provided a highly effective contrast to such greasy, R&B-laced fare as *If Ain't No Use*, and her quietly contemplative *Young and Foolish* brought out all the song's mellow nostalgia without undue sentimentality.

Bradford's forte, however — unsurprisingly, given the Basie outfit's legendary aptitude in the form — is the blues. Her closing number, a loose, raunchy celebration of the medium, consequently enabled her to showcase all her considerable talents: her voice swooped and soared; brightly inventive scat sections jostled appealingly with vigorous emotional outbursts and sudden ejaculations. By the time she had brought the number to an end with a powerful *That's All*, Bradford had achieved her aim: an exuberant crowd had been audibly uplifted.

CHRIS PARKER



Soon, on a worldwide stage near your Big Bad Voodoo Daddy will have an audience of hundreds of millions when they entertain football fans at America's Super Bowl later this month

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

SIMONE REBELLO

Age 27. Profession: Percussionist. She is the founder member of Backbeat, a percussion quartet which has built up a strong reputation over the past three years. You can hear them at the Purcell Room on February 2, or on their self-titled CD.

What's unusual about Backbeat's rhythm method? Instead of just standing behind drums, marimbas and music stands, Rebello and her three male colleagues roam the stage, sing, and use base kettles and their own bodies as instruments. "I wanted to make percussion more theatrical."

Basketballs? "The lads are into basketball and play in rehearsal breaks. We wondered if we could incorporate the game into our concerts and quartet member Damien Harron created *Rebounds*, in which two of us drum and the others pick up the rhythm by bouncing basketballs on the stage."

Repetoire: "There's a lack of good quartet percussion music, so we write a lot ourselves. We also play work by people like John Cage and Steve Reich."

Base drums: She first picked up sticks as a schoolgirl in Croydon. "There was a very strong woodwind tradition and I dutifully signed up for the flute. But after a year on the waiting list, I thought 'This is never going to happen' and went along to percussion with a friend."

Tuition: She won two percussion prizes at the Royal Northern College, in Manchester. "My tutors — Graham Johns, Ian Wright and Dave Hassall — were very influential. Seven years after graduating, if I'm in a fix I still go to them."

Why does her Portuguese surname sound familiar? She is a first cousin of the acclaimed jazz pianist Jason Rebello.

The Backbeat motto? "There's nothing we wouldn't do in a concert."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

What daddy-o did in the war

POP: Stand by your zoot suits, the big bands are back — and jumping.

Nigel Williamson on the Forties sound that's hot in the Nineties

On the floor of New York's Hammerstein Ballroom zoot suits and flared skirts abound. Dances such as the lindy hop and the jitterbug, scarcely seen in half a century, are being executed with immaculate precision and flamboyant skill. On stage the Brian Setzer Orchestra, with its 13-piece brass section, all of them dressed in green suits behind matching orchestra desks, is blaring out a mixture of swing, jump and jive as if Cab Calloway and Louis Jordan had never gone away. At the bar the only drink to be seen sipping is a fruit-flavoured martini complete with umbrella. It may be 1999 but it seems that swing is the thing once again.

In an improbable pre-millennium trend, the big band craze is currently sweeping America, as a new generation discovers the excitement of a sound that was last in vogue at the end of the Second World War. Bands such as the Brian Setzer Orchestra, the Squirrel Nut Zippers and the Cherry Poppin' Daddies have sold millions of records in America over the past year. Last month *Killing Stone*, still America's rock'n'roll bible, devoted a ten-page special to the swing revival. Later this month, another swing band, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, will be seen by hundreds of millions of television viewers around the world, when they perform at American football's Super Bowl.

In Britain, too, swing is tipped to be the next big thing. Although there

has been little chart action to match America yet, clubs with names like Zoot Suit Riot are opening everywhere and there are now an estimated 40 dance nights a week around Britain, offering not only the best in swing music, but classes in the accompanying dance steps. There is a growing number of British swing bands, too, led by the Big Six from London, who have just signed a major deal with Mercury Records.

"It's a reaction to years of grunge," says Jason Moss of Cherry Poppin' Daddies from Oregon, who have sold a million albums in America and made a big impact on their first visit to Britain last year. "The prevailing sound has been very dark and introspective for a long time. People are tired of that and want something more exuberant."

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy were perhaps the first to draw attention to the swing revival when they appeared in Jon Favreau's 1996 hit movie, *Swingers*. "We're coming from a jump sound, from people like Louis Armstrong, who played music that was more raw, more rocking than traditional swing," says singer and guitarist Scotty Moore. "I've never thought of our music as retro. Swing was originally like punk rock, the early primitive stuff, that big band mambo with

people dancing in the aisles before it became polished and clean and tame. What we do is wild and swinging Forties music with a Nineties twist."

All are agreed that the swing revival has no future if it just sets out to replicate the sound of the past. "If you

'Swing was like punk rock, the early primitive stuff, that big band mambo with people dancing in the aisles'

lick of paint then and that's what we are doing now."

Like the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, Setzer's album, *The Dirty Boogie*, went Top Ten in America. The sound is loaded with brass but is drier and funkier than the smooth mellifluousness of a Glenn Miller or Benny Goodman. "It's rockabilly, swing and rock'n'roll all put in that big band thing," Setzer says. "Everyone said: 'What are you doing taking big band music from the Forties and adding electric guitar?' They said it would never work. Now it's rolling. It's got style, a great vibe and great dances. It's on fire."

Setzer, who has also played on albums with Bob Dylan, Robert Plant and Ricki Lee Jones, put the orchestra together in 1993. "They were basically jazz musicians and I couldn't explain how to rock to them so it was initially hard," he says. "But we went on the road for a 50-city North American tour and they soon learnt. It hasn't been easy from a business standpoint. The cost of touring with such a large band is enormous and at first there was no radio airplay or music video exposure. We built it up on word of mouth. Once people saw us they would talk about us and that's how it eventually

took off." The orchestra is due in Britain in March.

Most of the new generation of swing musicians are not teenage hopefuls but thirtysomethings disillusioned with the banality of much modern rock music. Steve Perry, 34, of the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, says: "Swing bands are the antithesis of all those tired rock clichés. It's less tortured. There is no reason why swing can't be a viable modern music. Does it all have to be angst? When Count Basie got out there and smiled and the band was all brassy, it felt like a warm day and everything was going to be all right. What's wrong with that? Swing is probably addressing some kind of need in people right now."

Robert Austin, Britain's leading promoter of swing and a former dance champion himself, agrees. His club nights attract huge crowds, many of them dressed in full Forties costume. "When the Cherry Poppin' Daddies came to play in London I thought it was the best thing I had seen since the Jam in 1979," he says. "Swing in Britain is really exciting. We've seen what has happened in America and I'm sure exactly the same is going to happen here. It's a wave and you can either ride it or get very wet."

● The Dirty Boogie by the Brian Setzer Orchestra and Zoot Suit Riot by Cherry Poppin' Daddies are both released by Universal Records. Big Bad Voodoo Daddy's album will be released in the spring

VISUAL ART: In Venice, John Russell Taylor stands stunned by the contradictory wisdom of the Ancients

A masterclass from the Mayas

I magne a civilisation so sophisticated that it could still give us pointers on the measurement of time and the movement of heavenly bodies, and yet one whose technology did not include the wheel, and whose graphic art knew nothing of perspective. Add the fact that all its remains offer no unequivocal evidence of ferociousness, and seem to exclude completely the gentler feelings of love and tenderness. Something of another planet, maybe? Certainly that is where one often feels oneself to be in the often glorious *Maya* show, the latest of a series which has already filled Fiat's Venice art flagship, the Palazzo Grassi with the Celts, the Phoenicians and the Greeks.

But if one feels strange, one never feels alienated. No belief in intervention from outer space is required to fit the Maya into the human race. If Maya is just not quite the human race as we Indo-Europeans know it, it is a measure of the civilisation's philosophical sophistication that it could comprehend and reconcile opposites without the slightest difficulty, while in Europe generally, we struggle still, and struggle still. This may be the reason that for every categorical assertion

about the Maya and what they did and did not do, did and did not know, there is always at least one glaring exception. We say they did not know the wheel, and for themselves they did not. But their children's toys often ran on wheels. We say that they never discovered perspective, and yet there is one obvious instance, in a ceiling painting from Bonampak meticulously reconstructed for this show, where on one side a wounded warrior sprawls up a flight of stairs with quite Mannerist abandon, in full perspective some seven centuries before the Spanish conquest. It is almost as though they knew everything, but just chose not to bother with some. Even humour and tenderness may per-

haps be seen, although the only tender moment is in a small ceramic where a young woman delicately touches the face of a very old man, and we can only guess at humorous intent in some of the more grotesque figurines.

A large archaeological show like this should preferably satisfy both the specialist and the general public. For the experts in matters Mayan I have spoken to, the first criterion is well met: they are all ecstatic about the depth of the curators' researches, the astonishing way that if some tiny provincial museum in Mexico has just one outstanding piece, it has been tracked down and borrowed. At worst there are some quibbles about interpretation.

As far as the wider public is concerned, there can be no doubt whatever. If before entering you knew of the Maya only that they lived in Mexico before the conquest, you could rely on coming out with a clear insight into the history and a vivid feel for the nature of this remote and mysterious culture. Better still, you would have had an unforgettable aesthetic experience.

From that point of view, *Maya* is probably the best of the Palazzo Grassi's archaeological blockbusters. It might



A ceramic showing an anthropomorphic figure emerging from a flower, found at Jaina Island, Campeche, Mexico

fairly be said of some of its predecessors that they were fascinating in a Brain-of-Britain kind of way, but great art was a little thin on the ground. Here, on the other hand, the simple, monumental design of Agata Toricella Crespi and her

team is perfectly calculated to show off the works included as things worth looking at in themselves, rather than as mere stages in a continuing historical argument. And what wonders it offers the eye. Should one arrive by

water, the first thing one sees is the Chac Mool reclining figure in stone which so inspired Henry Moore that it set off the great series of reclining figures which were to preoccupy him for the next half a century. Whatever else, it serves to remind us that nothing in art is so remote that it cannot feed something of itself into our own aesthetic mindset.

Throughout the show the shock of strangeness and simultaneously of recognition recurs. The grander temple sculptures of gods and priests still seem decidedly sinister, but at the same time stagger us with their totally confident grasp of contained yet dynamic form. From the largest stone sculpture to the smallest ceramic, one cannot but be impressed with the Mayan sense of proportion, their ability to combine obsessively intricate detail with a daringly simple grasp of the whole to which the detail must ultimately be subordinated.

The show's other big surprise is the richness and variety of the colours in Mayan life and art. Most of even the largest carvings seem to have been brilliantly painted, while the pictures on plates and vessels, the reconstructed murals and the illuminations in manuscripts (represented by photographs, since the originals are too delicate to travel) all testify to the astounding life which surrounded and contained the Mayan obsession with death — very much as it does in modern Mexico.

● *Maya*, Palazzo Grassi, San Samuele, Venice (0039041 522 9875)

ROBERT LINDSAY IN GLITTERING FORM

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LISTINGS

Sher in The Winter's Tale

ARTS

Young talents showcased

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargre

LONDON

THE LIFE OF EDWARD II OF ENGLAND: Andrew Vinnicombe directs the Chichester Theatre Company in a new production of the play. It charts the corrupting influence of power while drawing on cabaret, song and dance. Riverside Studios, W8 (0181-4227 1171). Open tonight, 7.30pm.

PLG YOUNG ARTISTS: The first of tonight's two concerts by gifted young musicians features the pianist Stephen De Pledge (Rpm). At 7.30pm. Run Darby, Maria Remy and Alan Goldstein play more contemporary tunes by such household names as Ben-Zion Opat and Graham Hall. Purcell Room (0171-960 4242).

KONTRABANDE: This recently formed ensemble of countertenor, oboe, two strings and keyboard, specialises in the music of the 17th and 18th centuries. On the evening's menu are works by Bach, Vivaldi and Handel. Wigmore Hall (0171-966 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

JEAN JOHNS: Opening date for an exhibition of vibrant abstracts from the studio of the realist Oxford artist. The show runs in tandem with the estate sale of Lucy Cartington. Wexham (0171-937 8865).

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The charismatic Yan Pascal Tortelier returns to the city with the National Youth



Yan Pascal Tortelier conducts in Birmingham

Orchestra of Great Britain in a spectacular programme of orchestral showpieces. Opening the evening are Wagner's *Prelude* and *Die Meistersinger*.

The show runs in tandem with the estate sale of Lucy Cartington. Wexham (0171-937 8865).

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The charismatic Yan Pascal Tortelier returns to the city with the National Youth

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only ■ Some seats available ■ Seats at all prices

□ **COURT IN THE ACT:** 19th-century French farce by Hennequin and Vebor. Catching the law with its trousers down. Grand Theatre (0171-940 3633).

□ **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The D'Oyly Carte Company brings Gilbert and Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirates, poison and a modern music-hall style. The West End. Queens (0171-494 5041).

□ **THE TEMPEST:** David Calder, excellent in Adrian Noble's colourful 1992 production from Stratford, Barbican, (0171-636 8891).

□ **CHICAGO:** Maria Friedman in the musical of murder and music. Adelphi (0171-344 0030).

□ **DICK BARTON SPECIAL AGENT:** Journey back to the 1940s with the famous old radio thriller, brought to life by Phil Witkin. The Old Vic (0171-924 0030).

□ **THE GLEAM:** David Bull and Gaye Brown star in Sylvia Friedman

and Cathy Strong's uplifting new musical about the man-made moon. New End (0171-794 0022).

□ **JESUS MY SOUV:** Tom Conti in John D'Amico's joyful comedy, based on Joseph's side of the story. Apollo (0171-494 5070).

□ **PETER PAN:** Justin Saling in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook, in return of Peter Pan's enjoyable production. Olivier (0171-452 3000).

□ **THE SNOWMAN:** The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters star in a new production. Peacock (0171-663 8222).

□ **ARABIAN NIGHTS:** Al Bano, Sinbad and lesser known blues adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke. Young Vic (0171-626 6065).

□ **CHINESE WALL:** Neil Bartlett and the Shogakukan Pops team stage a sensuously wonderful version of Angela

Lyric (0171-741 8701).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and rebellion by Irvine Welsh. An independent production. With Stephen McKee, Ewan Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan.

SINCE (18): A French bourgeois family unravels itself. Mildly diverting lampoon, excellently cast. Director, Claude Lelouch.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a prescient race who have found the elixir of youth. Lightly comic. With Gates McFadyen, F. Murray Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes.

CURRENT

ENEMY OF THE STATE (18): Will Smith's lawyer tumbles upon a political conspiracy. Exciting, fast-paced thriller, with Gene Hackman and Jon Voight. Director, Tony Scott.

THE MIGHTY (PG): Endearing tale of two outcast children, one being, one crippled, who pool their resources. Peter Jackson directs. Sharon Stone, Ewan Bremner, and Ewan Bremner.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15): Richard Gere's love story, with the actress trying to find his loved one. Technically dazzling, but subverted by a woolly script.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U): Splendid animation, but there's not much for kids in the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites to the promised land. Video release. Includes Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes.

BABES IN THE CITY (U): Everyone's favourite talking pig faces the horrors of the modern city. Gaudy, over-the-top, but fun. With Margot Scolari.

DANCING AT LUGHANNA (PG): Compressed and perfunctory version of Brian Friel's play about the Gaelic games. With John Lynch, John Lynch, and John Lynch.

ON COMBAT LA CHANSON (PG): Theatrical relationship comedy, with a marvellous cast and lip-synched snippets of popular songs. Alain Resnais directs. With Jean-Pierre L  aud and Jean-Pierre L  aud.

RUSH HOUR (15): LA and Hong Kong cops join forces on a laptop case. Routine fare, enhanced by Jackie Chan's comic charm. With Jackie Chan and Jackie Chan.

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Gerald Larner pays centenary tribute to Francis Poulenc, the French composer without honour in France

Nearly 50 years ago Francis Poulenc declared that "if people are still interested in my music in 50 years' time it will be for my *Stabat Mater* rather than the *Mouvements perp  tuels*". In fact, he is remembered today, on the eve of the centenary of his birth, for both sides of his creative personality, both the fervent Catholic and the naughty boy, for both the Gloria and *Les Biches*, both *Les Dialogues des Carm  lites* and *Les Mamelles de Tir  sias*. Except, that is, in France, where they would apparently prefer not to remember him at all.

To the British, Poulenc is typically French, a kind of Maurice Chevalier of the opera house or the concert hall. That's why we like him and the pianist Pascal Rog   says, why the French do not.

Rog  , who probably knows Poulenc's music better than anyone, says that "French people don't like the image of themselves that Poulenc sends to them". Ignoring the serious works, which are not considered as Poulenc, "they see him as superficial while they want to be seen as serious. They want to be Brahms, and they are not made to be that." When Rog   tried to get a Parisian promoter to put on a Poulenc centenary series, he was told: "Forget it. The hall would be half-empty."

So the most extensive Poulenc centenary celebrations will be in this country, beginning with a long sold-out concert in the Wigmore Hall tomorrow. At a safe distance from the riverside promenade at Nogent-sur-Marne where Poulenc imbued so much popular music — and which, is no less reverberant with bad taste now that the guinguettes have given way to Disneyland — we can innocently enjoy his tuneful reminiscences of *Chariot*, *Ch  valier* and *Charles Trenet*. Remembering that, as he said, "from my childhood I have loved, without discrimination, the bal-musette and the suites of Couperin", we can also appreciate his stylistic inconsistencies — the disarming way in which he jostles Mozart with Satie, Bach with Chabrier, Schubert with Piaf, all of them with Stravinsky.

The problem with Poulenc, if there is one, is in reconciling the apparently much more basic split in his personality after 1936. That was when, after the death of a young colleague in a horrific road accident, he

turned to the Black Virgin of Rocamadour for reassurance, becoming a composer of religious music but without abandoning his playboy side. Rog   argues that "he remained the same, except that another side of himself was opened. It didn't split his personality but made his versatility the more astonishing. You must accept him as a whole. If you take away either part, the serious or the non-serious, you destroy him. If one part is erased, you get a pale photocopy of what he really is."

Having recorded not only the complete piano music but also all the songs, Rog   is far more likely to see consistency in him than contradiction. Although, like the composer himself, he regards the songs as the most important area of Poulenc's creativity, Rog   believes that "everything Poulenc wrote has character and personality. It's never dull. And it's very interesting to compare his first piano piece, *Mouvements perp  tuels*, with the last ones. Although they are more mature, you can still feel Poulenc's style, humour and melancholy. Everything is there from the beginning."

Rog  's first contact with Poulenc was when, at the age of six, he was turning the pages for his organist mother in a performance of the *Concerto for Organ, Timpani and Strings*. "It was a revelation. It was more than 25 years before I played a note by Poulenc — at the Paris Conservatoire he didn't exist — but when I did, it all came back to me."

His no doubt explains why another of the alleged problems with Poulenc, which is his reliance on other composers for stylistic models, scarcely seems to exist for Rog  . Poulenc described himself as "madly eclectic" and even wondered whether, if Stravinsky hadn't existed, he would have been a composer at all. But if you fall for the Organ Concerto (shamelessly synthesized out of Stravinsky's before you know real Stravinsky, your attitude will be rather different.

"Poulenc's music is more emotional than Stravinsky's," Rog   says. "It is a matter of personality. You can recognise Poulenc after one bar. It's been said that he used everyone's harmonies to write music like no one else's. That's true. He developed his own language, his own harmony, his own way of treating the melodies."

There has always been a feeling that Poulenc had it too easy. Born into Parisian high society, indulged by influential women no less than by men of a similar sexual persuasion like Cocteau and Diaghilev, never neglected in his lifetime, he is deemed not to have suffered enough. "He's paying for that now," says Rog  . "It will take another 50 years before all that is forgotten."

But, whatever happens in Paris, we don't have to wait that long. There is an extraordinary wealth of music readily available, its apparent artlessness and its elegance, its strength of character, derived not least from his composer's courage to be himself even if being himself meant being someone else. "After all," as Rog   says, "music is made for enjoyment, to bring happiness to people. I think Poulenc did that better than anybody else."

Pascal Rog   plays Poulenc at the Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Jan 31 and Feb 8. Yan Pascal Tortelier conducts the BBC PO in Poulenc in the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester (0161-907 9000). Jan 23. Opera North stages *La Voix humaine* at the Grand, Leeds (0113-222 6222) from Jan 22

Both sides of his personality are found in his music

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Creatures of habit: Poulenc with cast members at the 1958 UK premiere of *Les Dialogues des Carm  lites* at Covent Garden

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New year, new talents

The Christmas turkey has been picked to the bone and the new year is upon us: it must be PLG time. Sure enough, the Park Lane Group's 43rd season, kicked off on Monday with the first batch of gifted young musicians. So distinguished is the roll-call of previous PLG participants that competition is intense. This year 15 sets of artists have been chosen from more than 200 candidates. All recitals are being recorded and Radio 3 will broadcast a selection on January 22.

As always, the players are expected to offer contemporary music, and programming and presentation skills are given due attention. Both the London City Brass Quintet and the pianist Nicholas Hagen gave challenging programmes with not a turkey in sight, with the possible exception of Justin Connolly's *Cinquepays*, whose ungrateful sonnetaries gave the Quintet little chance to shine. All it did was mercilessly to expose ensemble when it was less than perfect. Stuart Macrae's *Among the Stones* was equally demanding

with its syncopations reminiscent of Thelemus Monk, drew a light touch from Hagen. Julian Anderson's *Flute No 3* is an "introverted reverie whose mood was nicely caught. The jazzy interludes of Sofia Gubaidulina's *Chaconne* speedily interlarded, though Hagen's finest moment came in the climax to the Icelandic composer Halldorsson's *Honour to Mondrian*: a peyote-like eruption sustained with thrilling rhythmic propulsion.

In the early evening recital, the Portuguese-perussionist Pedro Carneiro framed works for marimba by Jo   Pedro Oliveira, Nigel Clarke and Graham Fitch with the harder-edged *Bongo* by Roberto Sierra and Brian Ferneyhough's *Bone Alphabet*, rising well to the demand of each. Oliveira's *Crystal pyramids*, receiving its UK premiere, effectively explored a range of dynamics and texture, while Clarke's *Tungara* (European premiere) evocatively conjured the sounds of the South Seas.

BARRY MILLINGTON

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NEW HOMES

Rachel Kelly reports on the proposal for the Land Registry that will end the property price guessing game

Your biggest investment is no longer a secret

Dinner parties will never be the same again. Henceforth, we may be able to know the price that sellers originally paid for their houses and the putative profit that they could enjoy.

Such juicy figures and an intimate knowledge of our neighbour's bank balance will fuel our national obsession with house prices and the joys of making more money by watching the wallpaper than by going out to work.

Ministers are expected to announce shortly that henceforth the Land Registry, the government body that records property transactions, will soon include the price paid for a property alongside details of its registered title, mortgage and conveyancing.

Potential buyers could apply for a copy of the title, or if they have on-line access via the Land Registry direct access service, view the entry from a computer.

The reforms are part of Labour's manifesto commitment to freedom of information, and have been the subject of discussion since 1983 in the run-up to the opening of the Land Registry to the public in 1990.

They are also part of the Government's wider aim to reform the housebuying process, which is currently the subject of a consultation paper at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. Providing such information could be included in a logbook or sellers' pack to be assembled by sellers before putting a property on the market.

Should the reform be implemented, England and Wales will mirror the Scottish system where property prices have been a matter of public record since 1917.

It will be a return to the system used in England until 1976 when prices were included on the Land Registry, but since the Registry was not then open to the public, the prices could be disclosed only by permission of the owner.

Then the system was abused by solicitors, who often erased the previous selling price. The lawyers argued that if buyers could see how much the house price had risen, they might try to renegotiate.

Others argue that the price paid in a property transaction is essentially a private affair and is not in the public domain, and thus should not be the Government's to disclose. Certainly, the number of

'Anything that demystifies the housebuying process is a good thing. It will make valuation easier'

agents whose clients are obsessed with confidentiality clauses bears witness to the desire for secrecy about what is for many their biggest financial transaction.

Many lawyers still oppose the reforms, and have been lobbying the Lord Chancellor's Department to make their views known. So do some agents, such as David Parry, from Cluttons Daniel Smith in Maidstone. "Such an idea is an invasion of privacy," he says. "Property values can rise or fall in very

short periods of time. It may paint the wrong picture."

But most estate agents and surveyors have broadly welcomed the move and they are right to do so. The changes will see an end to inflated claims by irresponsible agents about how much a house is worth, only to win the commission for the sale.

Ultimately, says Guy Foster from Friend & Fiske, the London estate agents, the reforms will steady the housing market and restrain prices from galloping away from reality in an inflationary boom, which economists now agree has damaging effects on the wider economy.

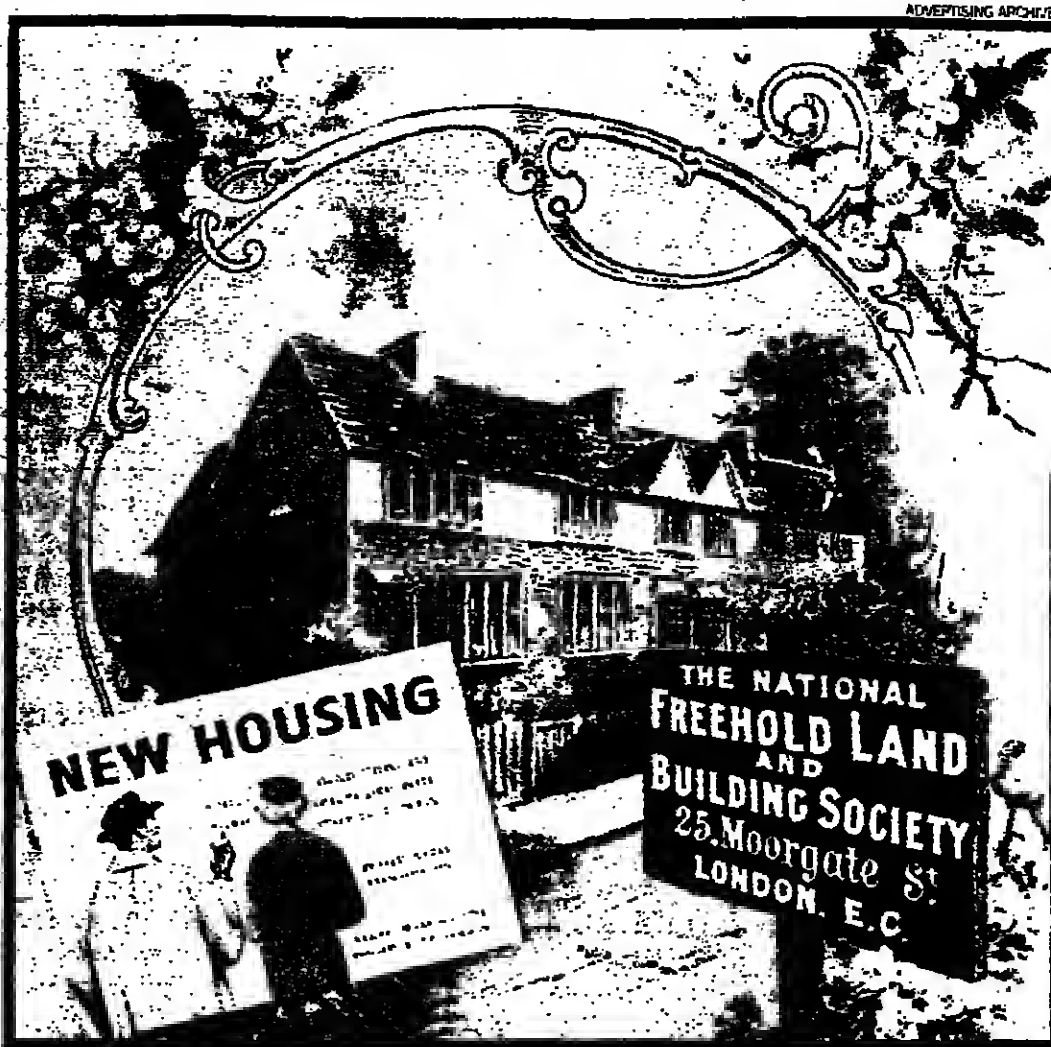
More information in general leads to more efficiency and such figures would be useful in terms of tracking the reality of what is happening to actual prices, rather than relying on the research of commercial organisations such as the Halifax and the Nationwide Building Society. It would help, too, in fraud cases.

"This should make the property market more efficient," says a spokesman for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, which has campaigned for change.

"Such information is already freely available in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and many European countries."

"The experience of openness in all of these countries is that personal and commercial privacy has not been compromised. Nor has the information been misused."

Willie Gething, from the buyers' agents Property Vision, says: "Anything that demystifies the housebuying process is a good thing. It will make valuations easier and will leave less room for economic



Those were the days: flashback to the time when homes could be bought for a few thousand pounds

guessing." Indeed, many switched-on buyers already try to find out as much about other sales in the area or the street in which they are interested, and such comparable sales are an essential element of the services provided by buying agents who do their best to assess values accurately.

But property experts also caution that the figures need to be used with care. Guy Foster notes that if a buyer can call up the Land Registry and find out all the house prices within the same street, this could complicate negotiations.

He says: "The Land Registry will not record the condition of a property, the size of rooms or its internal decorations." Richard Lambert from the British Property Federation echoes con-

cerns that the information could be misleading. Finer details of deals such as rent-free periods or methods of payment such as share swaps do not have to be included.

To have to answer "yes" or "no" to the proposals is to oversimplify the issue, Mr Lambert argues. Rather he wishes to see the proposal, which does have merit, fine-tuned.

Willie Gething points to other complications. In the country, many homes are registered in two parts: for example a rectory might be registered separately from some land or a cottage. Government figures could be misleading.

He says: "They may read that there have been no property sales of more than £2 million in Wiltshire in the past year, whereas we

will know of maybe three or four sales. The reason is that the sales included land or outbuildings which were recorded separately from the main house."

M Gething notes, too, that there could be complications with leasehold extensions which mean that prices are not necessarily comparable.

He says: "A house sold with a 50-year lease a few years ago may now be for sale with an extended 75-year lease."

The message is that if prices are published, such figures need to be treated with caution.

The approach may not add to the gale of dinner parties, but should add to the efficiency of the more prosaic business of valuations.

SMART MOVES

CHRIS EVANS, the owner of Virgin Radio, has bought a flat in Wilton Crescent, SW1. The ground floor and basement flat was sold on a short lease for about £700,000.

THE home of Sir Alan Glyn, the late Conservative MP who was also a soldier, barrister, doctor and expert on international affairs, is being sold by Farley and Co for £3 million. Seventeen Cadogan Place, SW1, consists of a main house and seven house, both in need of refurbishment. According to Dickens in Nicholas Nickleby, Cadogan Place was the connecting link "between the aristocratic pavements of Belgrave Square and the barbarism of Chelsea".

FUNTINGS, in Kirdford, West Sussex, a 17th-century Grade II listed house, is for sale. The house has five bedrooms and lies in 130 acres of pasture. Among those who have rented the house are Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit. Browns' Cranleigh office is selling the house for £2 million.

ALAN LEVY, the founder of the London Toy Museum and New Cavendish Books, is selling his flat in Stanley Gardens, SW11. The flat is packed with model trains, art books and all kinds of gadgetry. The flat is for rent through Chards' Camden Hill Road office for £1,350 a week.

THE Grade II listed Georgian house of Angela Billingham, Labour MEP for Northamptonshire and Blyth, is for sale. The Ivy House, Adderbury, Oxfordshire, has five bedrooms and a cottage garden and is for sale through Lane Fox for £355,000.

ALAN CLARK's former home at Town Farm House in Bratton Clovelly, Devon, where he lived before becoming an MP, has been auctioned for £167,000 through Knight Frank.

BEN WAKEHAM

Co-ownership scheme set to fail the poor

In April, the Government will change a housebuying scheme that has helped 50,000 people on to the first rung of the property ladder.

Those who qualify for help now, particularly Londoners and those from ethnic minorities, may soon be stuck in rented homes that are unsuitable.

The do-it-yourself shared ownership scheme (DIYSO), a homebuying incentive introduced by the Conservatives, also helps nurses and teachers whose low salaries make them unable to buy on the open market.

It allows a buyer to pay between 25 and 75 per cent of a new home, with a subsidised rent on the rest. If, for example, you took out a mortgage for 50 per cent of the property's value, the lower rent on the rest could in effect make the property 30 per cent cheaper than with a 100 per cent mortgage.

But last summer, the Government said DIYSO would be scrapped this year, in favour of a new scheme called Homebuy, where buyers would need to pay at least 75 per cent of the cost.

It is effectively an interest-free loan of 25 per cent. Steve Coleman, of the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust, is in favour, but he believes, it only offers an improved deal to people who are better-off.

Fifty-seven per cent of people who used DIYSO with Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust would not be able to afford Homebuy. Housing associations campaigned for the Government to change its mind and in November, Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, said she would keep DIYSO. But from April it will be financed by local councils rather than the Housing Corporation.

There is no extra money going to the councils and campaigners are worried that next year the scheme, in practice, will be cut, especially in the capital.

Sue Ellenby, the head of the National Housing Federation in London, says: "We were concerned about DIYSO being abolished as it allows people on lower incomes to own homes. The Homebuy scheme is not as accessible, particularly for those in London and the South East where property prices are high."

"Soon local authorities funding DIYSO will be pushed to make difficult decisions with limited funds. At the end of the day we are still arguing about a lack of resources to meet the range and level of need for affordable houses."

Realistically, DIYSO could be extinct in five months and London would be hardest hit.

Steve Nun, of Tower Housing Association, deals with boroughs in southeast London. "Southwark, Bromley and Greenwich are unlikely to earmark much money for DIYSO," he says. "They have other things they would rather spend this money on. As a result, some people will be stuck in the housing trap."

Last year his association helped 250 people to get housed under the

A plan to help low-paid buyers to find cheaper homes may backfire, says Senay Boztas

old government scheme or find accommodation in shared home ownership flats. In the case of apartments, a housing association buys or renovates a complex. Then prospective purchasers usually pay for half of their property and rent the rest. They can gradually buy the whole home, but unlike DIYSO, they cannot make their own choice of homes on the open market.

But even the shared home ownership schemes are not always suitable. In Buckinghamshire, for example, many local people cannot afford to buy property in expensive brownfield developments and new shared home ownership blocks cannot be built on green belt land.

Many projects are overburdened. Last year in London, for every person who found a place, nine were unsuccessful. There were more than 55,000 inquiries for 5,000 properties. Many waiting lists are years long.

Fourteen of the 20 most deprived local authority areas are in the capital. At the same time more than 120,000 households are in severe housing need because of dangers in their current homes, according to a London Pride Partnership survey.

Nick Ronald, the chairman of the London Home Ownership group, says a cake that is already small will have to be even more thinly sliced. Councils will have to split funding between three sorts of housing relief — DIYSO, shared ownership, and the new Homebuy.

scheme. "The local authorities are also under pressure to spend their money on urban regeneration and creating sustainable communities," he says. "In West London, where my Bush Housing Association works, I do not think boroughs will fund DIYSO."

"There is going to be a problem here. Since some areas are so expensive, low incomes for London can range from £12,000 to £25,000. There will be people caught in low quality housing and unable to get out."

He says ethnic minorities may be hit particularly hard. Last year these families accounted for 40 per cent of DIYSO users.

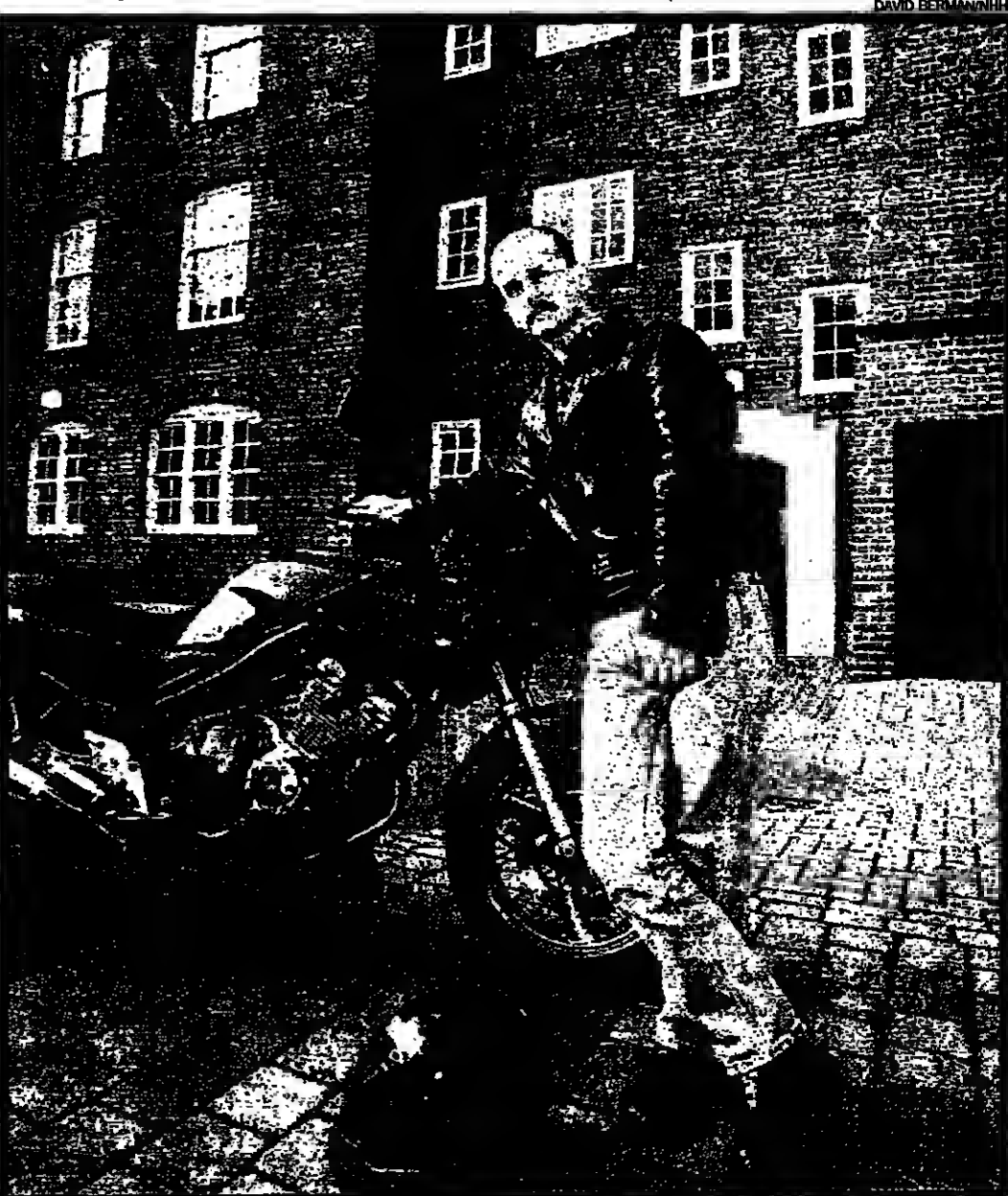
Councils may have more cash for housing generally from Labour's capital receipts initiative, letting them use money from the sale of council houses during the Eighties, but this is also used for repairing and building more social housing.

Duncan Bowie, of the London Housing Corporation, says: "For the first time we are leaving it up to councils to decide where to spend their money. Some may well back more renting instead of DIYSO. Early indications suggest fewer councils will use the Homebuy scheme. We are in discussions now to find out."

The future of the scheme is uncertain. It may still be available next year in boroughs such as South Buckinghamshire, but many are worried it will disappear. Penny Sychrava, of the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust, believes it will be obsolete within two years.

This year's funds are going fast. Even people racing to buy under DIYSO now may be disappointed. Both Tower Housing and Bush associations have stopped advertising because their money has already run out.

For details contact the Shared Ownership Advice Line on 0345 385757.



The DIYSO scheme provided a passport to "desirable" and expensive Pimlico for Marc Lewis

A FOOT ON THE LADDER

MARC LEWIS, a council worker, spent four years lodging with friends before DIYSO helped him to begin buying a home of his own.

The social policy research officer from the London Borough of Barnet earns just over £20,000 a year. But that was not enough for inner London property. Thanks to the DIYSO scheme, he now lives in Pimlico, southwest London, just behind the Tate Gallery. Mr Lewis, 43, says: "I wanted to live in Pimlico where I was staying with friends. I liked the area, but it is considered 'desirable' — so buying and renting are prohibitively expensive."

He moved into an £85,000 one-bedroom flat in late April, after gaining approval from his housing trust in February.

To buy his flat in the Millbank Estate he took out a mortgage with monthly payments of £460 to buy 60 per cent outright.

Now he pays £108 a month in rent to the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust and believes this is cheaper than private renting — although his monthly spend has doubled since his days of sharing.

He says: "I was ecstatic when I moved into an area that is safe and pleasant. It has everything. London's attractions are within half an hour's walk. The scheme gets people on to the housing ladder and I would recommend it."

He says DIYSO may not be right for people with special needs or those who do not want a mortgage. He also warns of additional costs — surveyor's and legal fees were higher than he had expected.

"I had the costs budgeted virtually to the penny, but it still cost me more. For someone more financially strapped it could have been disastrous."

A SENSE OF STABILITY

Rupert Procter, a 36-year-old actor, feels very lucky to have benefited from DIYSO. He saw homelessness looming when his sister and her husband — with whom he lodged — wanted to start a family. He tried to move from their Wandsworth home but could not get a mortgage.

"Acting is notoriously unstable," he says. "You can have no work for two months and then a well-paid television job. I was on £16,000 a year and had saved £6,000, but Barclays was still suspicious."

He had nearly given up hope of buying a £69,000 two-bedroom cottage in Tooting when a fellow actor told him about the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust scheme.

Spending all his savings on a mortgage down-payment with the Nationwide Building Society and

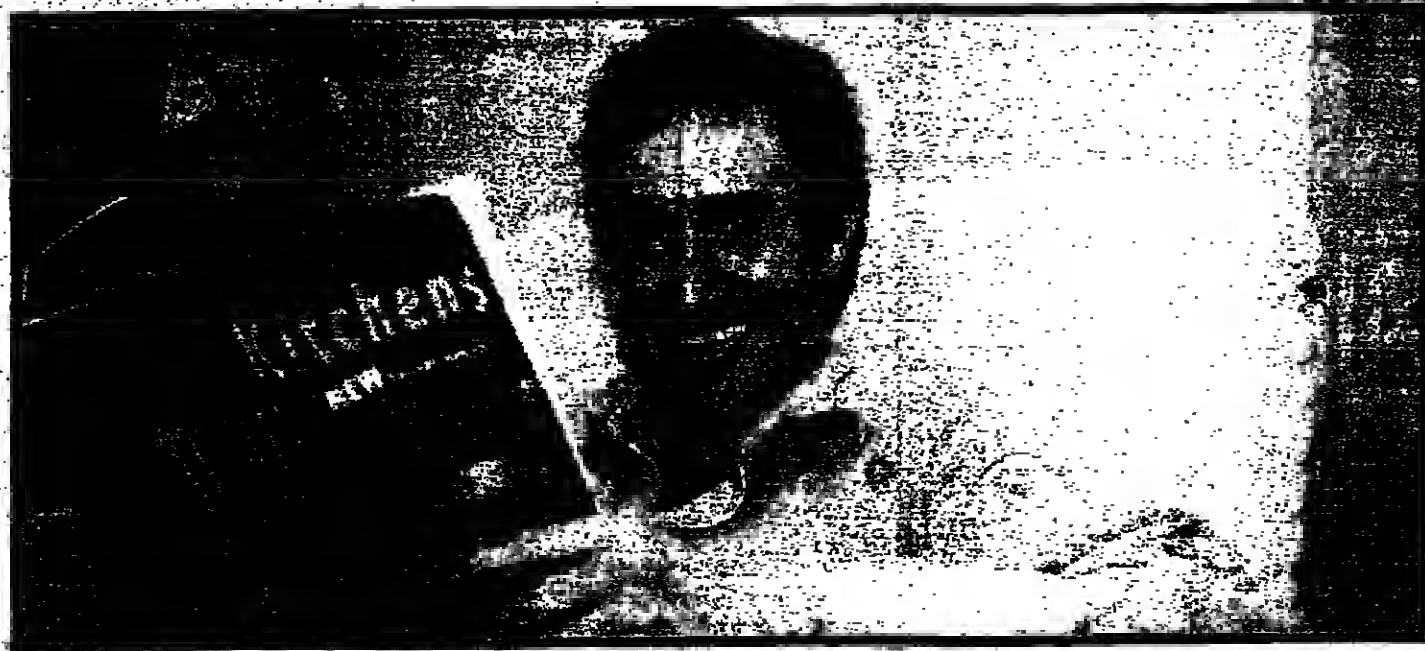
solicitor's fees, Mr Procter got an "unbelievable deal" from the association, which lent him the remaining £34,500, to be paid back at a rate of £120 a month.

With monthly mortgage repayments of £160, he is paying the same as he spent on rent — but now he has a home of his own.

"Getting my own home has been a change for the better without a doubt. It has made my life more complete," he says.

Now, with roles in television programmes, including *Peak Practice*, and earnings of £25,000, he is considering "staircasing": gradually buying a larger share in the cottage eventually to own it outright.

DIYSO was the starting point, and Mr Procter feels that even contemplating abolishing the scheme is disgusting. He believes it is a way for people to make their lives better.



Actor Rupert Procter is enjoying his new role as homeowner: he now pays the same in mortgage payments as he previously spent on rent

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

By the end of the calendar year it is possible that the England team will have a new captain and chairman of selectors, too, along with a new coach. That, however, will not

Australian facilities do not end

Chris Read, the A team wicketkeeper from Nottinghamshire, may play Test cricket before the end of summer.

Taylor holds up the Ashes trophy after Australia had beaten England in Sydney to secure the series 3-1. Photograph: Clive Mason/Allsport

He has been lucky, that much is true. Successful leaders often are. Since a poor first Test as captain in Pakistan five years ago, when he made a pair and Australia lost a classic battle by one wicket, he has

years ago when another failure would have compelled him to stand down. Players in dressing rooms all over England, watching his innings that day, joined in the applause when he reached his hundred. That is how Taylor is regarded

Taylor made an unlikely candidate when he presented his international credentials ten years ago. He did not hit the ball like other, more obviously gifted batters. In fact, he did not look an athlete at all, being tubby and slow. But his race is not always to the swift, and Taylor has proved himself the most sure-footed of men. In the ranks of modern captains, those since the war, he is among the best.

ALSO BATTED: D Gough (9 runs, 43 runs);
 J. Topley (4 runs, 38 runs); A.J. Tudor
 (4 runs, 30 runs); A.D. Murray (7 runs, 2
 runs); S. Broad (4 runs, 2 runs)

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Ave
O.W. Hensley	121.3	20	423	19	22.26
A.J. Tudor	42.2	8	180	7	25.71
P.M. Smith	116.6	24	323	11	29.38
A.D. Murray	75.3	44	389	12	30.33
D. Gough	107.1	39	359	21	32.76
S. Broad	10.0	1	41	1	41.00

W. Hensley 18 hrs.: 4:10 2 runs, 35 spurs: WK runs: 14 AC Fraser, G	W. Hensley 18 hrs.: 4:10 2 runs, 35 spurs: WK runs: 14 AC Fraser, G
---	---

5W 10W Best Bowls	
1	0 0-50
0	0 4-55
1	0 5-11
1	0 5-10
1	0 5-59
0	6 2-58

Bowling	
SR Waugh	11
J.N. Gillespie	222
S.C. Macal	1252
G.D. McGraith	124
D.W. Fleming	134 51
C.R. Miles	59
N. Nicholson	25
M.E. Waugh	25

	W	L	W%	Avg	5Y	15Y	Best Bow
3	25	2	214.00	0	0	2-5	
2	11	7	15.85	1	0	5-8	
2	478	27	12.70	0	0	7-50	
3	492	24	20.50	1	0	8-65	
9	392	16	24.50	1	0	5-46	
8	236	9	26.44	0	0	3-57	
4	115	4	28.76	0	0	3-59	
2	90	3	30.00	0	0	2-55	

0 J Nesh not out
 Extras (8.5, 10.5, w 1, nb 3) 18
 Total (8 wickets) 320
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45, 2-69, 3-78, 4-85,
 5-225, 6-225.
BOWLING: Prasad 27-5-55-1; Singh
 15-2-72-1; Srinath 20-8-82-1; Kumble
 34-9-82-1; Tendulkar 7-0-30-2; Ganguly
 3-1-3-0.
INDIA: First Innings 415 (R S Dwyed 150, S
 R Tendulkar 67, J Srinath 76, C L Coombs 4
 for 107).

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

M O Bell lbw b Tendulkar	25
M J Horne c Monge b Srinath	26
*S P Fleming b Prasad	18
R G Twose lbw b Tendulkar	26
C D McLean c Monge b Singh	84
*A C Parore c Singh o Kumble	50
C L Cairns not out	52
O J Nash not out	49
Extras (lb 5, lb 5, w 1, nb 3)	18
Total (8 wickets)	323
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-85, 2-69, 3-78, 4-85, 5-225, 6-225.	

ing the king of spades at trick made a decision.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TIMKAT
2. a. *hinkat*

FEED PREP
a. Private study

26	Nc3	Nh3	38	g5	h5
27	Qxg5	Nh2g5	39	Ne4	h6
28	o6	Nd4	40	h4	h5
29	Rf1	Nf3	41	Qc3	h5
30	Nd5	Rac3	42	Qe3	h6
31	Bxd4	exd4	43	h5	h6
32	Rd7	Rac6	44	h5	h6
33	Ne7+	Roe7	45	Qe3	Qe7
34	Roe7	h5	46	Qf6+	h5
35	g5	Rd6	47	Qh5	h5
			48	b3	h7
			49	Ne4	h6

ALSO BATTED: D Gough (9 runs, 43 runs);
 J. Topley (4 runs, 38 runs); A.J. Tudor
 (4 runs, 30 runs); A.D. Murray (7 runs, 2
 runs); S. Broad (4 runs, 2 runs)

Bowling

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A.D. Murray	75.3	44	369	12	30.75
D. Gough	101.3	39	359	21	31.71

W. Hesley 18 hrs.: 41	U. MacLean 30 hrs.: 20
2 hrs.: 35 runs: WK	Werns 2 hrs.: 10
runs: AKCFaser 3	
Boating	
5W 10W Best Boat	
1 0 0 0-30	SR Waugh 11
0 0 0 4-35	J.N. Gillespie 222
1 0 0 5-10	S.C. MacIs 1852
1 1 0 5-10	G.D. McGraith 184
1 0 0 5-10	D.W. Fleming 134
1 0 0 5-10	C.R. Miles 99
0 6 2-90	N. Nicholson 25
	M.E. Waugh 25

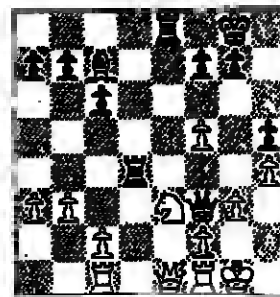
	W	L	W%	Avg	5Y	15Y	Best Bow
3	25	2	214.00	0	0	2-5	
2	11	7	15.85	1	0	5-8	
2	478	27	12.70	0	0	7-50	
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9	392	16	24.50	1	0	5-46	
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4	115	4	28.76	0	0	3-59	
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 R Tendulkar 67, J Srinath 76, C L Coombs 4
 for 107).

TIMKAT
a. A biscuit
b. A festival
c. A bearing

SEELING
a. Blinding
b. Aquatics
c. Battlefield

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RUGBY UNION

Wasps aim to get title challenge back on course

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THREE of the best-known clubs in London rugby are vying for supremacy in the capital at the halfway stage of the Allied Dunbar Premiership — nor can any of them be discounted as potential winners of the first division. For the time being, however, neither Saracens, Wasps nor Harlequins will look much further than the next game.

At the weekend Wasps and Saracens changed places in the table, thanks to the unexpected defeat Wasps suffered at the hands of West Harlequins in the black North East. They can reverse that situation when they entertain Saracens at Loftus Road this evening and, if there was any hint of complacency among Wasps at the weekend, there will be none now. "West Harlequins played particularly well and we played particularly badly," Nigel Melville, director of rugby at Wasps, said. "It shows you can't afford to have a poor game in this league and I have no doubt that West will do the same to other teams before this season is through. But I don't have any problem about the big games, about players raising themselves for the occasion."

Wasps stood as firm as any when they went to Vicarage Road in October. They came away with a 31-17 win in a game which — allied to their wayward display against Harlequins nine days earlier — caused Saracens far more doubt about their immediate future than September had suggested they should have.

Moreover, Saracens remain without Francois Pienaar, their captain-coach, whose foot injury keeps him out. However, Alain Penaud

returns at fly half, having come through a fitness test yesterday on his "dead leg".

That will be a considerable relief to Gavin Johnson, who returns to his natural position of full back, from which he scored an injury-time try against Wasps ten weeks ago.

Wasps have moved Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain, from blind-side flanker to No 8, a position that he frequently occupies in the national side, whatever the number on his back may say. That allows the inclusion of Eben Rofelt, who has been in good form of late.

"Where we play Lawrence depends upon whom he is playing with," Melville said. "We are very pleased with Eben and we have Joe Worsley on the bench, who can act as an impact player."

Andy Reed is preferred to Simon Shaw at lock. Simon Mitchell and Darren Molloy rejoining the front row.

Mitchell is set for a decent run at hooker as Trevor Leota, the stalwart Samoan, is likely to be missing for three weeks after damaging a knee against Gloucester. Paul Sampson, who won such plaudits for the decisive try against Gloucester, gives way on the wing to Shane Roiser.

Gloucester have a problem to resolve with David Sims, their captain, who has been omitted from the first XV since mid-November. Sims, 29, has been overshadowed by Mark Cornwall, while Rob Fidler, his fellow lock, has been leading the side.

Sims has been linked with Cardiff and Bristol but has 18 months of his contract remaining and Richard Hill, the director of rugby, is keen not to lose one of his forward assets.

"We would like Dave to stay at the club and fight for his place," Hill said.



Gillett, of England, watched by McMahon, of Australia, rolls the jack during their first-round pairs match yesterday

Schuback keeps his nerve

A SUPERB take-out from Ian Schuback, who is regarded by bowls enthusiasts as a sort of Crocodile Dundee, turned almost certain defeat into a 7-4, 7-3, 4-7, 2-7, 7-6 victory for him and his fellow Australian, Ian Taylor, in the first round of the world indoor pairs championship at Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast yesterday.

Having won the first two sets, Taylor and Schuback were pegged back by Rowan Brassey, of New Zealand, and Steve Glasson, of Australia, who won the next two and looked the likely winners when they led 6-5 in the decider.

On what turned out to be the last end, Brassey set up a match tie, but Taylor, the man with the impossibly complicated delivery, trailed the jack expertly to a back position, and settled down approximately 18 inches in front of the little white ball. Glasson, ranked No 1 in

David Rhys Jones watches one of the most endearing characters in bowls upstage Australia's No 1

Australia, drew beautifully to restore the match tie, but Schuback, like a master marksman, ruthlessly struck the shot off the rink. Glasson, surprisingly unable to repeat the accuracy of the first bowl, then finished two yards short. Already holding one shot, Schuback was left with the easiest task of drawing the winner. "Anywhere within two yards would have done," he said. "If I'd missed that, I'd have been looking for a rope to hang myself."

Earlier, Schuback, always a favourite with the Guild Hall crowd at Preston, and now the darling of Potters, produced an astonishing conversion shot to win the first set, when the scores were level at 4-4. Brassey and Glasson

held a set tie, with three good shots near the jack, when a Schuback bullseye removed all three red-disc bowls and left three yellow-disc bowls in a scoring position.

Five bowlers from the southern hemisphere participated yesterday: in the first match, Mark McMahon, who lives and works in Sydney, partnered David Gourlay, of Scotland, into the quarter-finals.

McMahon lends a cosmopolitan dimension to the arena: born in Dunfermline, he played bowls internationally for Hong Kong. He gave Gourlay a good start, matching and often beating Les Gillett, *The Times*/Taylor English Bowler of the Year in 1998, to the jack.

Robert Newman, Gillett's skip, who will be 24 next month, played well enough to suggest he will be a force to be reckoned with in future, and the match looked destined to go the full distance.

The English pair won the first set by the narrowest of margins, and, although they lost the next two, they appeared comfortable in the fourth: only to concede two successive doubles and allow the No 5 seeds to ease through, 6-7, 7-5, 7-4, 7-4.

"We played two loose ends, and paid the penalty," Newman, who reached the quarter-finals of the world indoor singles championship, last year, said. "It's especially important to be consistent in two-bowl pairs, and they were more consistent than us — particularly towards the end of each set."

FIRST ROUND: M McMahon (AUS) and D Gourlay (SCO) 2-1 L Gillett and R Newman (ENG) 6-7, 7-5, 7-4, 7-4; I Taylor and I Schuback (AUS) 7-4, 7-3, 4-7, 2-7, 7-6; S Glasson (AUS) 7-4, 7-3, 4-7, 2-7, 7-6.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Gateshead choose Walters as captain

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: Kerrod Walters, 31, the former Australia hooker, was yesterday named captain of the new Gateshead Thunder club, whose first competitive game is against Leeds Rhinos at Gateshead International Stadium in the JJB Super League, on March 7. Walters was in the second wave of imported players who arrived from Australia on New Year's Day. Work permits are still awaited for the last two Australian players to be signed, Brett Grogan, a forward, and Brett Eagles, who failed with two earlier attempts to sign Paul Anderson, 21, from St Helens, have agreed to pay the £10,000 asking price for the utility player.

■ CRICKET: Somerset have appointed Jamie Cox, the Tasmanian batsman, as their captain and overseas player for next season. Cox has been the Tasmania vice-captain under David Boon's leadership for the past three seasons. Peter Anderson, Somerset's chief executive, said: "We were looking for a proven top-order batsman with captaincy ability who would be available for the whole season. We believe we have found such a player."

■ SQUASH: Two exceptional players emerged from the semi-finals of the CGU British junior open championships at Abbeydale Park in Sheffield yesterday. James Willstrop, a 6ft 3in 15-year-old from Pontefract, defeated Alberto Marrero, of Spain, 1-9, 9-5, 9-3, 9-1 in the semi-final of the boys' under-17 championship while Omar Refaat, 14, from Egypt, defeated Dylan Bennett, of Holland, 9-2, 9-4, 9-3 in the boys' under-15 championship.

SATURDAY. ANYTHING BUT A DAY OF REST.

SPORT
Vision
WEEKEND
metro
the times
magazine
meg@

THE TIMES

RACING: TBA CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR DECLARATION OF VENDOR PURCHASES

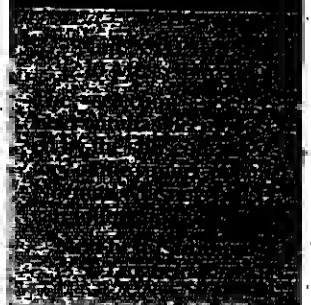
Phantom sales haunt breeders

By CHRIS McGRATH

A SKELETON in the cupboard of commercial breeding was dragged into the open yesterday, though it would probably be more accurately described as a phantom. Nigel Elwes, chairman of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (TBA), used its annual general meeting in London to draw attention to the mass of undisclosed "vendor purchases" at public yearling auctions - which shadowy practice lurks, in his estimation, behind as many as 20 per cent of sales.

It is common knowledge in the bloodstock world that some top vendors enlist satellite interests or agents to inflate the value of yearlings, especially those by a new stallion for whom they wish to create a vogue. Setting a trend will have paid for itself by the time the young horse in question resurfaces to race under its breeder's own umbrella.

RICHARD EVANS



DANOLI, above, will be joining the Irish pilgrimage to Cheltenham this year. The popular 11-year-old has been dogged by injury, but will be among the entries for the Tote Gold Cup at today's noon deadline.

Tom Foley, his trainer, is confident that his charge will be fit to take his place alongside a glittering array of stars, led by the King George VI Chase winner, Tecton Mill, and Florida Pearl in the blue riband event on March 17. "We've entered him and he'll definitely be there," Foley said. "It's something I'm looking forward to."

But Foley reported: "So far so good with him. He's been ridden out for the last nine days and is fine. The plan is now to go for the Hennessy Cognac



Gold Cup at Leopardstown next month and then on to Cheltenham."

Foley believes that Florida Pearl - another likely participant in next month's Hennessy - is the horse to beat at Cheltenham. "He made a silly mistake when he came down last time at Leopardstown and still has a point to prove, but he's still the one as far as I am concerned," he said. "Tecton Mill looked good at Kempton, but I would question the form of some of the horses that finished behind him."

urge the sales companies to declare vendor purchases, however they may be disguised, so that we can get a proper valuation of the market."

Elwes, soon to become the TBA's first nominated director to the British Horseracing Board (BHB), is anxious that the "outside world is not deceived" by headlines of record-breaking purchases.

He added: "It's a fundamental point. I think it's wrong you can have a non-sale recorded as a sale. It has no problem with the concept of buybacks."

But I do with the fact that they're undisclosed. My guess is that 15 to 20 per cent of the horses at the main yearling sales in this country are subject to undisclosed buybacks."

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He added: "It's a fundamental point. I think it's wrong you can have a non-sale recorded as a sale. It has no problem with the concept of buybacks."

response to tax incentives available to Irish stallion owners.

"They must surely realise that they're losing huge amounts of revenue through the migration of mares to Ireland," he said, noting that British breeders last year paid £16.4 million to Irish stallion owners in covering fees alone.

"That ignores the keep of mares while at stud in Ireland. I'm afraid this migration will continue until we make it financially viable to stand commercial stallions in this country." As it is, there are only 20

MUSSELBURGH

THUNDERER
12.40 FINISTERRE (nap), 1.10 Rallegio, 1.40 Mr Cavallo, 2.10 Marble Man, 2.40 Pontevedra, 3.10 Owens Quest, 3.40 Nokimover.

GOMS: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES)

12.40 PRESTON TOWER MAIDEN HURDLE

(2,402: 2m) (15 runners)
4th CEMARA PARADISE 21 (M) 5-11-11 ... A. Dobson 51
3rd FINISTERRE 21 (M) 5-11-11 ... M. R. Evans 49
2nd MARBLE MAN 21 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 47
1st OWENS QUEST 21 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 45

1.10 PINKIE HILL CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS

SELLING HURDLE (2,248: 2m) (11)
1-35 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 97
2-36 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... M. R. Evans 95
3-37 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 93
4-38 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 91

1.40 CARBERRY TOWER NOVICES HANDICAP

CHASE (2,283: 2m) (8)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 77
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 75
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 73
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 71

2.10 AULD REEKE HANDICAP CHASE

(2,397: 2m) (7)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 80
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 78
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 76
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 74

2.40 MILLER HILL MARES ONLY HANDICAP

HURDLE (2,281: 2m) (12)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 100
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 98
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 96
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 94

3.10 MILL LADE HANDICAP CHASE

(2,474: 3m) (10)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

3.40 MUSSELBURGH MAIDEN OPEN NATIONAL

HUNT FLAT RACE (1,564: 2m) (15)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

2.50 HILLY MAIDEN HURDLE

(2,257: 2m 110yd) (7 runners)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

3.20 ROCK SAINT CHALLENGE TROPHY (HANDICAP CHASE)

(2,543: 2m 4110yd) (5 runners)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

3.50 SOUTHERN COUNTRY HANDICAP HURDLE

(2,710: 2m 110yd) (7 runners)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

1.50 HATED NOVICES CHASE (2,736: 3m) (8 runners)

1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

1.00 SANDSTORM AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP

(Div 1: £1,497: 6m) (9 runners)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

2.00 BLIZZARD SELLING STAKES

(Div 1: £1,506: 1m 1170yd) (9)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

2.30 TEMPEST STAKES (2,285: 1m 100yd) (13)

1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

3.00 WILLIAM HILL (SHOWCASE HANDICAP AND TOTE TAKE RACE)

(3-Y-O: £5,918: 1m 100yd) (8)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

3.30 HURRICANE HANDICAP (2,583: 1m 40) (8)

1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

4.00 BLIZZARD SELLING STAKES

(Div 1: £1,497: 1m 1170yd) (8)
1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

4.30 MONSOON HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,775: 5f) (8)

1-24 FINISTERRE 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... F. M. 121
2-25 MARBLE MAN 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 119
3-26 OWENS QUEST 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... P. M. 117
4-27 RALLEGIO 22 (M) 5-11-11 ... C. McKeown 115

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Lingfield Park

Golgo standard
12.45 (1m) 1.10, 2.10, 3.10, 4.10, 5.10, 6.10, 7.10, 8.10, 9.10, 10.10, 11.10, 12.10, 13.10, 14.10, 15.10, 16.10, 17.10, 18.10, 19.10, 20.10, 21.10, 22.10, 23.10, 24.10, 25.10, 26.10, 27.10, 28.10, 29.10, 30.10, 31.10, 32.10, 33.10, 34.10, 35.10, 36.10, 37.10, 38.10, 39.10, 40.10, 41.10, 42.10, 43.10, 44.10, 45.10, 46.10, 47.10, 48.10, 49.10, 50.10, 51.10, 52.10, 53.10, 54.10, 55.10, 56.10, 57.10, 58.10, 59.10, 60.10, 61.10, 62.10, 63.10, 64.10, 65.10, 66.10, 67.10, 68.10, 69.10, 70.10, 71.10, 72.10, 73.10, 74.10, 75.10, 76.10, 77.10, 78.10, 79.10, 80.10, 81.10, 82.10, 83.10, 84.10, 85.10, 86.10, 87.10, 88.10, 89.10, 90.10, 91.10, 92.10, 93.10, 94.10, 95.10, 96.10, 97.10, 98.10, 99.10, 100.10, 101.10, 102.10, 103.10, 104.10, 105.10, 106.10, 107.10, 108.10, 109.10, 110.10, 111.10, 112.10, 113.10, 114.10, 115.10, 116.10, 117.10, 118.10, 119.10, 120.10, 121.10, 122.10, 123.10, 124.10, 125.10, 126.10, 127.10, 128.10, 129.10, 130.10, 131.10, 132.10, 133.10, 134.10, 135.10, 136.10, 137.10, 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Garnished with a balcony and sea view

Why did Padstow's most famous chef travel all the way to Naples to kick off his new cookery series, Rick Stein's *Seafood Odyssey* (BBC2)? Because that way he could be sure of laying his hands on that key ingredient needed to cook successfully: a large balcony that looks out over a spectacular view. Antonio Carluccio did it, also in Italy (though he occasionally had to improvise by cooking on a hillside). Ken Hom did it, still-trying his scallops in California. Now Rick's done it. You can feel pretty confident that if a country doesn't have the sort of architecture that accommodates balconies, then its cuisine doesn't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world of television cookery. Dick Smith made a half-hearted stab at it in his recent series by having a new kitchen specially built in her glass-walled conservatory: it afforded leafy views

over the countryside beyond, but it just wasn't the same. Not that Rick actually travelled to the Naples we ourselves see when we get off the plane. He was in a mysterious Naples which had no 16-year-olds avoiding traffic jams by driving their Vespas along the pavement, or people looking for horses' heads they could slip into their enemies' beds. In Rick's Naples, the men behaved like extras in a Fellini movie, and the women all talked like Sophia Loren. "This is like making love," purred Giovanna Ruffone, a Neapolitan explaining the depth of her passion for food. "Making love is not just physical sex — it's love for everything, the flowers, the sea. Love for cooking is part of all that."

This is, in fact, exactly why Rick chose to begin his odyssey in Naples, "because it's a city where life revolves around food... people are brought up on the simple things. They have a focus on ingredients and care about them. Italy is about passion and flavours. They couldn't give a stuff about co-ordinators and lemons. They just want to know where the best tomatoes and lemons come from." In this, Rick pinpointed one of the glories of Italian food: Italians have been cooking these dishes for centuries and have reached the conclusion that if they could be improved by adding galingal and coconut milk, then someone would have done it by now. Critics might call this attitude insular. Fans rejoice for it.

Yet in his quest for simplicity, Rick experiences erratic and alarming mood swings: one moment he's a gentle soul, rhapsodising romantically about tomatoes; the next he ignites like a chip-pan fire, inveighing against "film-fam garnishes" and "bits of whatnot on the top" and the next he's reciting emotionally

makers come along at once. Don Boyd's *Fall Frontal* in *Flop Flops* (ITV) lost some of its punch coming soon after Channel 4's documentary which covered similar ground (flesh?). It was another gawp at a bunch of people you won't be seeing riling enthusiastically through the clothes racks in the January sales. But what it lost in punch it made up for in panache — Boyd's panache — as we watched the director struggle entertainingly with the dilemma of whether or not to sue his subjects and go naked at Sue and Dave's wedding reception along with the guests.

Any thought that the naked option might have been his way of saving money on hiring a morning coat at Moss Bros was soon dispelled when Boyd took to the nudist lifestyle with all the passion of the newly liberated convert. Once he'd taken the plunge, it was hard for Boyd to keep his genitals out of camera shot. But Boyd also took

the trouble to point out that nudism is not just about a group of people who feel persecuted by society because they find clothes restrictive. He interviewed Janice Scarlett, who was raised by Customs after they'd intercepted naturist videos showing a French holiday camp, in which children were frolicking naked. Scarlett eventually won his case.

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

from Tennyson and Conrad, as though afflicted by a peculiarly articulate form of Tourette's syndrome. Naturism documentaries may not be the new rock 'n' roll, but they're fast turning into the new television cookery show. Soon everybody'll be making one. You wait years for a film-maker to take his clothes off in front of the camera, and then suddenly two naked film-

As HTV West except: 12.15-12.30pm Central News (6242983) 1.00 Echo Point (82438) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9271438) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (174341) 3.25-3.55 Central News (2250525) 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (4202934) 6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (165392) 10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (165392) 3.50pm Central News; Weather (165392) 5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (413849)


As HTV West except: 12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (9626235) 12.27-12.30 Illuminations (6250902) 1.00 Emmerdale (82438) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9271438) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (174341) 3.25-3.55 Westcountry News; Weather (2250525) 5.08 Birthday People (857032) 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (4202934) 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (96893) 10.30-10.40 Westcountry News; Weather (766933)

As HTV West except: 12.15-12.30pm Meridian News; Weather (9626235) 1.00-1.30 Shortland Street (82438) 1.30-1.40 Home and Away (174341) 1.40-1.50 Meridian Tonight (167) 10.30-10.40 Meridian News; Weather (766933) 5.00-5.30pm Freescreen (46484)


BBC1
6.00am Business Breakfast (41254)
7.00am BBC Breakfast News (787983)
9.00am Kilroy (1) (8936781)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (1) (5306931)
10.55 News; Weather (1) (7275525)
11.00am Real Rooms (7285022)
11.25am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (7255781)
11.55 News; Weather (1) (1488457)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (58322)
12.30am Battered Dogs' Home (83056)
1.00pm O'Clock News (1) (80070)
1.30pm Regional News; Weather (88959761)
1.40pm Neighbours Lou, Midge and Harold continue feuding (1) (8555677)
2.05pm Invisibles: A television uniting people with Raymond Burr (1) (7932051)
2.55pm Going for a Song (8934506)
3.20pm The Weather Show Weather stories and reports (1) (8285457)
3.25pm Children's BBC: Playdays (8875328)
3.45pm Little Monsters (9350457) 3.50pm Chucklevision (9357419) 4.10pm See It Saw It (1) (11111) 4.35pm The Wild: House (1991833) 5.00pm Newsround (9333322) 5.10pm Blue Peter (8878877)
5.35pm Neighbours (1) (788264)
6.00pm O'Clock News; Weather (1) (159)
6.30pm Regional News; Weather (821)
7.00pm Money for Old Rope: Jonathan Maitland offers tips on making the most of financial investments (1) (1308)
7.30pm **CRIME** Dream House: New series. Carol Vorderman and a team of experts attempt to build a dream house for the 21st century (1) (235)
8.00pm Changing Rooms: New series. The team come to the rescue of four neighbours whose kitchens are badly in need of a revamp (1) (889)
8.30pm Battered Dogs' Home: Shaula Lowy introduces the first of a series of highlights from the daytime documentary. The comedian Sean Hughes visits the shelter to choose a companion for his dog Bill (1) (810519)
8.50pm National Lottery: Amazing Luck Stories. Musicians David Curtis, celebrates an unexpected success (1) (93877)
9.00pm Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (1) (6167)
9.30pm The X-Files: A computer program with its own reasoning and conscience destroys its creator and plans further destruction (1) (750941)
10.15pm **CRIME** Jobs for the Boys: New series. Hale and Pope by their hand at sports commentary (1) (235525)
11.10pm Violence: Fire on the Mountain (1987) Premise. Dan Cortese stars in this disaster movie about an idyllic ski resort thrown into panic by the eruption of a nearby volcano. Directed by Gennaro Campello (1) (855119)
12.35pm The Cassandra Crossing (1976) A wounded terrorist carrying a deadly virus boards a transatlantic train, risking the lives of all on board. Disaster epic, starring Burt Lancaster and Martin Sheen. Directed by George Cosmatos (1) (89793)
2.35pm **CRIME** (483552)
2.40pm BBC News 24 (24670216)


BBC2
7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Daily the Dinosaur (7845439) 7.05pm Teletubbies (2201896) 7.30pm Yogi's Treasure Hunt (2584983) 8.20pm The Really Wild Show (3160148) 8.40pm Police Dot Shots (8002633) 8.55pm Daily the Dinosaur (858070) 9.00pm Burn (7338185) 9.10pm The Phil Silvers Show (574689) 9.30pm The Phil Silvers Show (529419) 10.00pm Children's BBC: Teletubbies (41693) 10.30pm The Battle of Australia (42664) 12.30pm Working Lunch (81148) 1.00pm Burn (7347506)
1.10pm The Arts and Crafts Hour: France Stock looks at antique clocks (2762148)
2.10pm Darts: World Professional Championship Highlights: yesterday's second-round matches. Includes News at 2.40 and 3.25 (9373693)
3.30pm Wildlife on Two (728)
5.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation: A star rescued from a wrecked spaceship claims aliens attacked the ship — but is he telling the truth? (1) (42322)
6.45pm Buffy the Vampire Slayer: A series of unpleasant accidents disrupts the cheerleader auditions (1) (235525)
7.30pm Tales from the Riverbank: Geoffrey Palmer looks at all aspects of angling, spending a summer day fishing a trout stream (1) (872)

8.00pm **CRIME** Battle of the Sexes: New series. Samuel West narrates an insight into the sex lives of animals, revealing a competitive, selfish and violent battle for supremacy where the biggest is often best as aggressive males vie for the ultimate prize — a mate (1) (7438)
8.30pm **CRIME** Front: Salvage expert Neville Griffiths shows how to recreate a period bathroom (1) (9273)
8.40pm Red Dwarf VI: The crew find themselves facing a gang of virtual reality gunglers inside Kryten's electronic mindspace (1) (1) (4708)
9.30pm Clockwatch: How the coming of the millennium led to a global way the country told the time (1) (169457)
9.40pm The Flow of Time: The paradoxes of time, questioning the long-held belief that it flows like a river and suggesting instead that the future and past are very much out there (1) (894457)
10.20pm Trade Secrets: Photographers reveal all (1) (7544418)
10.30pm **CRIME** Presented by Jeremy Paxman (1) (480490)
11.13pm Suspended in Time (1) (938877)
11.15pm Darts: World Professional Championship Highlights: Round-up of the action (54148)
11.55pm Weather (720070)
12.00pm The Phil Silvers Show: Doberman stands for mayor (1) (33303)
12.30pm Close

HTV
5.30pm ITN Morning News (67544)
6.00pm GMTV (608186)
9.25pm Trisha (1) (236312)
10.25pm This Morning (1) (62821631)
12.15pm HTV News (1) (9626235)
12.30pm ITN Lunchtime News (1) (42542)
1.00pm WEST: Next Stop Local news update from Shepton Mallet, presented by Richard Wall and Polly Lloyd (82438)
1.00pm WALE: Shortland Street (82438)
1.30pm Home and Away: Gypsy doubts Will's sincerity (1) (82638)
2.00pm The Jerry Springer Show: Outrageous anything-goes talk show (1) (2166341)
2.45pm Dale's Supermarket Sweep (1) (73612)
3.15pm ITN News Headlines (1) (2253612)
3.25pm HTV News (1) (2250525)
3.35pm Teletubbies (872070) 3.45pm Junior (872178) 4.10pm Whizzwag (8837051)
4.40pm Mad for It (737693)
5.10pm A Country Practice: Terence and Rosemary's plans go to pot (4202934)
5.40pm ITN Early Evening News; Weather (1) (31993)
5.59pm HTV CrimeStoppers (373322)
6.00pm Home and Away: Gypsy doubts Will's sincerity (1) (82638)
6.25pm WALE: Wales Tonight; Weather (1) (76532)
6.25pm WEST: HTV Weather (900148)
6.30pm WEST: The West Tonight (1) (419)
7.00pm Emmerdale: Terry turns down Viv's offer (1) (8544)
7.30pm Coronation Street: Alf's funeral proves a trying occasion for Audrey (1) (631)
8.00pm Who Wants to be a Millionaire? Big-prize game show (1) (4964)
8.30pm Police, Camera, Action! The pursuit of a runaway coach on the M1 and a car thief whose 15mph getaway bid leads to shake off the officers on his last (1) (3099)

9.00pm **CRIME** Survival Special: The story of Scarface, a lioness who lives in the Nakuru National Park along with her eight cubs (1) (6419)
10.00pm News at Ten; Weather (1) (81419)
10.30pm HTV News and Weather (1) (760698)
10.40pm Shining Through (1985) A secretary discovers her boss moonlighting as a spy for American military intelligence. Romantic thriller, starring Michael Douglas and Melanie Griffith. Directed by David Seidler (1) (6584387)
1.05pm Strangers (1989) Drama about a businessman whose life is thrown into turmoil by his relationship with three different women: James Healey stars. Directed by Craig Lahiff (1) (73668)
2.45pm Masterclass: Wayne Sleep (7108303)
3.10pm Call My Bluff (1) (4837587)
3.25pm Trisha Show earlier (1) (8339736)
3.55pm HTV Nightscreen (73108213)
5.00pm Coronation Street (1) (48484)

CENTRAL
As HTV West except: 12.15-12.30pm Central News (6242983) 1.00 Echo Point (82438) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9271438) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (174341) 3.25-3.55 Central News (2250525) 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (4202934) 6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (165392) 10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (165392) 3.50pm Central News; Weather (165392) 5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (413849)

CHANNEL 4
5.55am Seaside Story (4058544)
7.00am The Big Breakfast (70893)
9.00am The Cosby Show (1) (81896)
9.30am Ten North Frederick (1988) Family drama, with Gary Cooper. Directed by Philip Dunne (1) (18273)
11.30am Here's One I Made Earlier (1) (3070)
12.00pm Seaside Story (41032)
12.30pm Bewitched (42524)
1.00pm Pet Rescue: The work of RSPCA centres (1) (7378)
1.30pm Web Annotated short (75343506)
1.35pm Golden Girl (1951) Musical about a woman who becomes a showbiz star, while realising the heartache waiting just around the corner. Mica Gaynor stars. Directed by Lloyd Bacon (1) (20425051)
3.30pm Hampton Court Palace: Joe Cowell describes the night, in 1898, when the palace caught fire (1) (825)
4.00pm Fifteen-to-One Highlights (1) (772)
4.30pm Countdown (1) (1985032)
4.55pm Rick Lake (1) (409490)
5.30pm Pet Rescue: The RSPCA team rescue a cat wedged underneath a bridge and rush it to the Ark for a check-up (1) (896)
6.00pm Caroline in the City: Del and Charlie find love in the laundrette and Caroline consults her boyfriend for advice about her poorly cat (859254)
6.25pm Suddenly Susan: A friend begins to take up too much of Susan's time, and Jack tries to improve work relations (667273)
6.55pm Planet Pop Music News (783070)
7.00pm Channel 4 News; Weather (1) (958099)
7.55pm Cuban Faces: What everyday life is like in Havana Vieja (35) (1) (803693)
8.00pm Brookside: Gemma has a shock in store (1) (2506)
8.30pm The Real Holiday Show: Three Glasgow pals take a trip to Turkey, the Canillies from Lancashire form a 'last-minute' family holiday to Minorca and a travel agent visits Jordan (78) (1) (4341)

9.00pm Cracker: Part two. The teacher accused of murdering a teenage boy confesses to the crime, but DCI Balborough soon notices inconsistencies in his testimony. Robbie Coltrane and Christopher Eccleston star (2/2) (1) (88767612)
11.05pm Who Line Is It Anyway? With Ryan Stiles and Phil LaMarr (156051)
11.35pm Fidel: Portrait of the Cuban President, whose leadership of his troubled country has kept him in the spotlight (253098)
1.10pm Board X: Last year's snowboarding (1) (6030228)
1.40pm Gazzetta: Football Italia Round-up of the week's action (1) (797755)
3.35pm Transworld Sport (1) (8326262)
4.30pm The Power and the Glory (1933) Drama, told entirely in flashback, about the rape-to-riches rise of an industrial tycoon. With Spencer Tracy. Directed by William K. Howard (4833823)

CHANNEL 5
6.00pm 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (7184341)
7.00pm WideWorld: The realities of rural life in Victorian England (1) (9269544)
7.35pm Milkshake! (3502887)
7.55pm Wimpie's House (1) (9990457)
8.00pm Havelkazeo (1) (130148)
8.30pm Deppledown (1) (339419)
9.00pm Hot Property (1) (335098)
9.30pm The Oprah Winfrey Show (1678898)
10.20pm Sunset Beach (1) (2803341)
11.10pm Leisure 5 News at Noon (1) (1332325)
12.30pm Family Affairs: Annie tells Chris they're through (1) (1) 5 News Update (9109964)
1.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful: Sheila is found in a pool of blood (1) (9268815)
1.30pm The Roseanne Show (1) (902235)
2.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (6522235)
2.30pm Good Afternoon Daily entertainment, 5 News Update (4728059)
3.30pm Joe Dancer — The Big Black Pill (TVM 1981) A private detective is wrongly accused of murder, and follows a trail of corruption that leads to a wealthy family. With Robert Blake and JoBeth Williams. Directed by Reza Badiyi (889549)
5.20pm Sunset Beach (1) (1) (6351419)
8.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (4580544)
8.30pm Family Affairs: Dave works his charm on Annie (1) (5471898)
7.00pm 5 News; Weather (1) (6523051)
7.30pm Champions of the Wild: The work of the Tigers Forever project, which was set up to highlight the illegal trade in animal parts (1) (5460780)
8.00pm The Pepsil Chart From London's Sound Republic, presented by Dr Fox. Featuring a performance by the Lighthouse Family: 5 News Update (6549098)
8.30pm Road Pages: New series exploring the origin of the modern phenomenon of "road rage", and separating myth from reality, surrounding such unknown quantities as female car owners and Sunday drivers (1/5) (1) (6528506)
9.00pm Those Secrets (TVM 1991) A young mother is forced to resume her former life as a prostitute when her marriage falls apart. Emotional drama, with Rob Brown, Arliss Howard and Paul Giamatti. Directed by David Manson; (1) 5 News Update (52404032)

10.40pm Not Melinda's Big Night in Showbiz: chat hosted by Gail Porter (868490)
11.20pm Strange Luck: New series about a journalist who attracts good luck. After helping Chance to deliver a baby, Angie decides to find out what a typical day in his life is like (5914033)
12.15pm NFL: American Football: Houston Oilers vs. New York Jets (8550858)
4.40pm Club Class Comedy (1) (7270684)
5.05pm Move on Up (1) (8556945)
5.30pm 100 Per Cent Gold (1) (2051151)

For further listings see Saturday's Vision
SKY 1
7.00pm Court Drama (43231) 7.30pm Chris Evans (62509) 8.30pm Hollywood Squares (1987) 9.00pm Sally (1983) 10.00pm Oprah Winfrey (15780) 11.00pm Gail (35044) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 1.00pm The Bill (1987) 1.30pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 2.00pm Sally (1987) 3.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 4.00pm Sally (1987) 5.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 6.00pm Sally (1987) 7.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 8.00pm Sally (1987) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 10.00pm Sally (1987) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 12.00pm Sally (1987) 1.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 2.00pm Sally (1987) 3.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 4.00pm Sally (1987) 5.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 6.00pm Sally (1987) 7.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 8.00pm Sally (1987) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 10.00pm Sally (1987) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 12.00pm Sally (1987) 1.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 2.00pm Sally (1987) 3.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 4.00pm Sally (1987) 5.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 6.00pm Sally (1987) 7.00pm Jerry Jones (1) (241) 8.00pm Sally (1987) 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RUGBY UNION 36

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SPORT

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

SIMON BARNES 34

How young superstars
can so easily
fall back to earth



Bassett angry over dismissal Forest target Atkinson in survival fight

BY RICHARD HOBSON

THE uneasy and occasionally fractious relationship between Dave Bassett and the Nottingham Forest plc directors ended yesterday with an acrimonious departure from the club that he guided into the FA Carling Premiership last season. Bassett had read of his impending dismissal in the morning newspapers before his worst fears were confirmed by Phil Soar, the chief executive.

Although Micky Adams, his assistant, has been placed in temporary charge for the visit to Coventry City on Saturday, the board will meet 24 hours earlier to discuss a replacement. Ron Atkinson, at present on holiday in Bermuda, is the clear favourite, having shepherded Sheffield Wednesday to safety in 1997-98. The task at Forest, in twentieth place and without a win in 17 league games, a Premiership record, would appear to be harder still.

Soar confirmed that Atkinson was among the candidates, but said that no contact had yet been made "to my knowledge". Any approach will come from Irving Scholar, the director in charge of the club's football affairs, who decided Bassett's fate.

In an unfortunate slip of the tongue as he read a prepared statement, Soar said that Bassett was leaving "by mutual consent", only to correct the error in his next breath. For once, the garrulous Bassett kept his observations succinct before he left the City Ground for the last time. The relative brevity of his comments amplified his frustration.

"Getting the sack is part and parcel of football. It is a volatile business and I am more upset at the way it has been done," Bassett, whose compensation payment may amount to several hundred thousand pounds, said.

"The club have done it in an undignified manner... to see it in the papers and then have it confirmed is a rather rude way of doing business. It shows the difference in quality of dealing with people. When I was sacked by Elton John at Watford he called me to his agent's home. We sat down and sorted out the situation - we were both upset but realised what had to happen. We had a glass of champagne and remained friends." It is hard to imagine him sharing a drink with his latest employers.

Bassett was appointed as general manager of Forest in March 1997, a month after the club had been taken over by a five-man consortium that included Soar, Scholar and Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens Rugby Football Club. He assumed full control after Stuart Pearce left for Newcastle United, when Forest slipped into the Nationwide League first division, and supervised an immediate return to the Premiership.

However, problems surfaced last summer with the sales of Colin Cooper and Kevin Campbell and the decision of Pierre van Hooijdonk to conduct a one-man strike in Holland. Bassett was further aggrieved when the board paved the way for Van Hooijdonk to return two months into the season, having bought Neil Shipperley as a replacement for £1.5 million.

He felt that the Holland international forward would undermine morale and the pair never disguised a mutual antipathy. While suggesting that "the majority of players think they have let Dave Bassett down", Adams admitted that "some are highly pleased" with his departure - a clear indication that all is not well in the dressing-room.

Despite spending around £17 million in 22 months, Bassett felt more money needed to be made available as attempts to sign Brian Deane and Nathan Blake were scuppered on the grounds of cost. Indeed, Atkinson may be reluctant to accept the job of saving Forest from a third relegation in seven seasons, knowing that any funds must be generated through sales. There is also unease among supporters, who have protested more vocally against the board than Bassett after each of the past two home games.

Wray, the majority shareholder and plc chairman, said on Monday that the bank would not give any more money. A share flotation last summer realised just £2 million. "This is where we are and we have to get out of it," Wray said.

Referring to the financial situation, Geoff Thomas, one of the most successful signings before injury took hold, said that Bassett "has been punished for something that was not in his control". He added: "Dave is one of the best motivators in the game. With the results we have had there was going to be a question mark, but whether somebody else can come in and turn it around... I don't know if that is the answer."

EMBOLDENED by defeat in which there was, eventually, no dishonour, Alec Stewart yesterday made a plea for continuity in the management of the England team. His remarks may seem untimely on the day another Ashes series was lost 3-1, but Stewart recognised it as a moment in which he could speak from strength.

Stewart wants to continue in the captaincy when his appointment expires after the World Cup in June. Moreover, and far less likely, he wants David Lloyd to remain as coach and he is plainly prepared to bend a few ears to achieve it. He used the after-match ceremony as his first platform, specifying in his speech what help he had enjoyed from Lloyd and adding: "I would like to think we'll go on working together for some while to come."

In the media conference that followed, he returned to the topic. "David Lloyd has done a tremendous job as coach and I hope he continues to do it," Stewart said.

This was the second calculating intervention Stewart has made on Lloyd's behalf in the space of four months. Back in September, as Lloyd wavered over his future after a second stern reprimand for public statements, Stewart sought out media outlets in which to voice his support of the coach.

Now, aware that there are those seeking a change, and that Lloyd's response to it has been to identify his own time to stand aside, Stewart has spoken out again. He chose his moment well, for this was a day, indeed a fortnight, on which England heads could be held high, even in Australia. The final Test of a series far more memorable than had seemed likely ended 20 minutes after lunch on its fourth afternoon. The fantasy of an England victory faded fast once Stuart MacGill, upstaging Shane Warne once more, had eliminated the middle order on his way to match figures of 12 for 107.

It was an outcome that had seemed inevitable since England lost the toss, yet they had hurled themselves at Australia with such ferocity that, fleetingly, one of the most remarkable of all Test victories had been a possibility. So often, it has been the manner of defeat that



Stewart, the England captain, third from left, and his players look on as Australia celebrate their victory in the fifth Test and the Ashes series

England revival gives Stewart opportunity to bat for Lloyd

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

SYDNEY (fourth day of five): Australia beat England by 98 runs

EMBOLDENED by defeat in which there was, eventually, no dishonour, Alec Stewart yesterday made a plea for continuity in the management of the England team. His remarks may seem untimely on the day another Ashes series was lost 3-1, but Stewart recognised it as a moment in which he could speak from strength.

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three Tests I hadn't seen much change in their cricket, but the last two were different. A fourth morning of clear blue skies and hot sunshine brought another fine crowd, alive with expectation. Yesterday's attendance of 27,754 raised the match aggregate to 142,282, rescuing the budget of the Australian Board after the Boxing Day washout and three-day finish in Melbourne. It also proved beyond valid argument that the Ashes remains its status as the greatest of cricket's attractions.

It required optimism on a grand scale to believe England's eight remaining wickets would yield the 183 runs still required, but they had probably not bargained on losing one of their most important wickets to seam bowling. Glenn McGrath dismissed Mark Ramprakash through a smart, low catch at first slip by Taylor, taking him past Allan Border to the world catches record of 157. Warne opened from the other end and repeatedly spun the ball past the bat without reward. "He's not at his best yet," Taylor said. "As they say in racing, he will be better for the run, but although one leggie got 12 wickets and the other only two, I didn't think there was much between them."

Nasser Hussain was once again batting with great skill and intensity, working the ball into gaps for the singles that eluded his team-mates. It was a violent square drive for four, though, that saw McGrath out of the attack and ushered the game towards a rapid end.

MacGill, unrecognisable from the erratic bowler who began the series in Brisbane,

needed only nine balls to open his day's collection, bowling Graeme Hick behind his legs as he missed a sweep. Hussain, when 44, was missed by Healy off MacGill but it was Colin Miller, firing in his off breaks, who removed John Crawley with a questionable leg-before decision.

Warren Hegg, who has proved no more productive than his predecessors at No 7, too-ended a catch to Healy in straining to reach a long-hop from MacGill, who then effectively ended the contest by taking a return catch from Hussain as he checked a drive. The game squeezed past the lunch break and MacGill

picked up the last three wickets in four overs. Tudor was bowled sweeping. Headley went in for an instinctive grab from Healy and, finally, Such saw his powerful shot strike the heel of Slater, at silly point, and lob up for MacGill to catch in the style of a man who can do no wrong.

Stewart led his players across to the stand where England's more vocal supporters had chanted through four days. Then he spoke with honesty of a series that had slipped away before England began to play. "I think 3-1 was a fair reflection because we underperformed for the first three Tests," he said. "But when we are really up against it, we fight back well."



"The race is not always to the swift, and Taylor has proved himself the most sure-footed of men"
Michael Henderson on the Australia captain, page 35

has dismayed England followers. Here, it was the manner of it that cheered the thousands of supporters who had turned Sydney, like Barbados a year ago, into an outpost of St John's Wood.

Praise came from all quarters. Typically, Mark Taylor was gracious in victory. The Australia captain said he felt England had played better in Sydney than in the Melbourne Test they won. He added: "We have been challenged over the last ten days. England haven't just made us wobble, they've nailed us. They bowled us out twice in each game, which I had always thought would be their problem. In the first

FA rules dictate long campaign

Matt Dickinson says
candidates for the
FA chairmanship are
biding their time

THOSE who believe that the Football Association should press ahead with the appointment of a new chairman immediately, rather than waiting until the summer, received powerful backing yesterday from one of the leading candidates for the position. David Sheepshanks, chairman of Ipswich Town and one of the favourites to succeed Keith Wiseman, who resigned on Monday, believes the interim period is unhelpful.

"It is a pity that it will take so long," he said, "but the constitution of the FA only allows the election of the chairman once a year, at its annual meeting."

That will ensure five months of electioneering until the vote in June but none of the expected candidates would declare their hand yesterday for fear of being seen as too eager. "I am flattered by the attention in the press," Sheepshanks said, "but we will have to wait and see. It is a huge job with a lot of challenges to be

met on and off the field." There seems little doubt, though, that the old Etonian will stand.

However, his position would be complicated should Ipswich Town win promotion from the Nationwide League first division this season. As one of the Football League's representatives on the FA Council, Sheepshanks would have to seek re-election either through his local association or from the Premier League.

Geoff Thompson, who is deputising as chairman until June, has yet to declare

his hand but seems certain to stand, while David Dein, vice-chairman of Arsenal, and Dave Richards, chairman of Sheffield Wednesday, will canvas opinion from Premiership chairmen first.

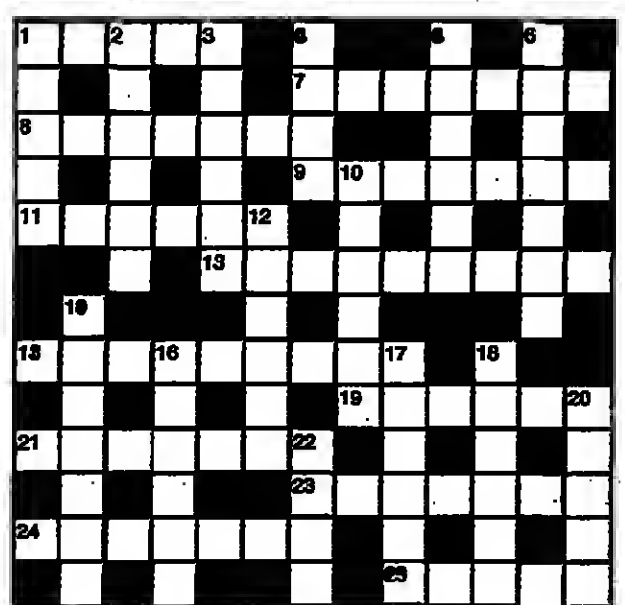
Next week, the FA's executive committee will have the first look at a working party's proposals for reform of the association. These are expected to include a plan to cut drastically the number of councillors from the amateur game by merging county associations into larger regions. How much power the FA Carling Premiership clubs should wield is certain to cause lively debate as will suggestions that Wiseman's successor should become the organisation's first paid chairman.

Applications for the post of chief executive will also be sifted through next week, and it has to be decided whether the appointment should be made before or after the issue of the chairmanship is resolved.



Bassett, left, returns from training to hear his fate yesterday

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1607

- ACROSS
1 Be oblique (5)
2 Oppressive rule (7)
3 Within hearing (7)
4 Having extrasensory perception (7)
5 Without strength (6)
6 Obstreperous (9)
7 Full of passionate unreason (9)
8 Humbert's obsession (6)
9 Distorted (eg message) (7)
10 Quito its capital (7)
11 Displaying no initiative (7)
12 Linger (5)
- DOWN
1 Muffer (5)
2 Bad (egg) (6)
3 Romeo kills him (Shak.) (6)
4 Measure: stair (4)
5 Abandon, make void (6)
6 Very old (7)
7 Gregarious like Rousseau's Contract (6)
8 White stout fur (6)
9 Muslim fasting month (7)
10 Place of lying in wait (6)
11 Plaguey grasshopper (6)
12 Load-bearing beam (6)
13 Regular, imposing display (6)
14 Profound (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1606
ACROSS: 7 Hypochondria 9 Rapport 10 Padre 11 Hoop 12 Typecast 15 Plymouth 17 Lift 19 Lathi 21 Overall 22 Get the hang of
DOWN: 1 Symphony 2 Colon 3 Chatty 4 Snippet 5 Breed 6 Take its toll 8 Archipelago 13 Animator 14 Tonight 16 Trophy 18 Jenny 20 Tote

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